

# THE MUSICAL TIMES

## AND SINGING-CLASS CIRCULAR

DECEMBER 1952

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### MUSIC

'Songs of praise the angels sang.' Anthem by Eric H. Thiman.

## The Study and Teaching of Musical Composition

By ALAN BUSH

MUSICAL composition has been learned and taught in Western Europe for about a thousand years. For the first hundred and fifty years of this time the musical treatises covered the whole subject of music and, as far as composition was concerned, did no more than expound the methods whereby counter-melodies to the plainchants were currently being improvised by singers. But in the 'Musica' of John Cotton, dated approximately 1100, we have a genuine treatise on composition. This work lays down general principles and gives practical examples which are designed to show that alternative solutions to a particular problem are possible; one melody is taken and various counter-melodies provided by the author. From that date until quite recent times (say the year 1920, though the exact date varied from one country to another) these two aspects of the teaching of composition have always been considered necessary; there has always been an accepted system of general principles, and, in addition, practical exercises have been provided by means of which the student learns to apply these principles as he considers best.

These general principles have, of course, changed as music has developed. How were they arrived at in their day? The process was different in different periods. At first they were based on the theological outlook of the early Middle Ages and, on the musical-technical side, were deduced abstractly from the numerical theories of consonance which had been inherited from classical Greek philosophy. As learned musical practice became more widespread, these musical-technical theories, correct as far as they went, needed to be expanded. During the early thirteenth century they had to provide the basis for new musical styles which were becoming established through the creative efforts of individuals or schools of composers, efforts inspired by a changing and increasing social demand; such were, for example, the styles of the Notre Dame organa. The Florentine *Ars Nova* produced also its theorists in the early fourteenth century. The influence of folk-music on

composed music had its repercussions with the development of *gymel* and subsequently of English *discant* and the continental *faux-bourdon*. It was for the practical and systematic mastery of these techniques that such treatises were designed as those of Leonel Power on *Discant*, 'for hem (*them*) that will be singers or makers or teachers', and the Scottish Anonymous on 'Faburdun' (B.M. Add. 4911). In these treatises no theological basis for musical practice is propounded; the authors concern themselves solely with musical-technical problems. Both are explicit in their statements of general musical principles and precise in their explanations of the practical application of these principles.

As a result of the increasing importance of secular music, and the beginnings in the Renaissance of a scientific world-outlook, the authors of treatises on composition no longer sought a theological basis for their general principles. Zarlino in his 'Istituzione harmoniche' (1558) attempts to base his principles on scientific laws. Zarlino regarded music as a reflection of nature and concerned himself with the means of the musical reflection of human emotions. In his thirty-second chapter on 'How the harmonies are adapted to the words placed beneath them' he wrote as follows:

'For if in speech, whether by way of narrative or of imitation (and these occur in speech), matters may be treated that are joyful or mournful, and grave or without gravity, and again modest or lascivious, we must also make a choice of a harmony and a rhythm similar to the nature of the matters contained in the speech in order that from the combination of these things, put together with proportion, may result a melody suited to the purpose.' (Quoted in O. Strunk, 'Source Readings in Music History'; Faber.)

There then follows a lengthy paragraph giving the kind of intervals, melodic movement, and rhythmic character suited to the expression of various emotions.

What Zarlino did on the practical side for the Italian school was done for English music by

Thomas Morley in his 'Plain and Easy Introduction to Practical Music' (1597). In his foreword 'To the courteous reader' the author explains his aim as 'in some sort to further the studies of them who (being indued with good natural wits, and well inclined to learn that divine art of Music) are destitute of sufficient masters'. The book begins with an explanation of musical notation; this introductory section leads to the main part, an admirable textbook of composition, comprising both general principles and practical examples. The principles and practice are those of Morley's immediate predecessors. His intentions and difficulties are well expressed in another passage of the foreword.

'Taking therefore those precepts which being a child I learned, and laying them together in order, I began to compare them with some other of the same kind, set down by some late writers: but then I was in a worse case than before. For I found such diversity betwixt them, that I knew not which part said truest, or whom I might best believe. Then was I forced to run to the works of many, both strangers and Englishmen (whose labours together with their names had been buried with me in perpetual oblivion, if it had not been for this occasion) for a solution and clearing of my doubt. But to my great grief, then did I see the most part of mine own precepts false and easy to be confuted by the works of Taverner, Fairfax, Cooper, and infinite more, whose names it would be too tedious to set down in this place.'

Morley's solution is to explain the practice generally followed by his greatest predecessors and contemporaries. He does not attempt any kind of theoretical basis for the rules advocated. Where he criticizes or allows deviations he makes it clear that these are his own opinions, arrived at for this or that reason.

Subsequent writers of textbooks on composition fall into two categories. There are on the one side the theoreticians, who, like Zarlino, attempt to found musical laws on more general principles, usually mathematical. Rameau, with his 'Treatise on Harmony reduced to its natural principles' (1722) and Hindemith with his 'Craft of Musical Composition' (1937) are examples of this. On the other hand there are the more empirical teachers, who, like Morley, content themselves with advocating rules of procedure, which, they believe, summarize the practice of their immediate predecessors. Such was Johann Joseph Fux, whose 'Gradus ad Parnassum', first published in 1725, formed the basis of the teaching of so-called 'strict counterpoint' until the end of the first world war. In the 'Author's Foreword to the Reader' he writes as follows:

'Some people will perhaps wonder why I have undertaken to write about music, there being so many works by outstanding men who have treated the subject most thoroughly and learnedly; and more especially why I should be doing so just at this time when music has become almost arbitrary and composers refuse to be bound by any rules and principles, detesting the very name of school and law like death itself. To such I want to make my purpose clear. . . . Medicine is given to the sick, and not to those who are in good health. However, my efforts do not tend—nor do I credit myself with the strength—to stem the course of a torrent rushing precipitously beyond its bounds. I do not believe that I can call back composers from the unrestrained insanity of

their writing to normal standards. Let each follow his own counsel. My object is to help young persons who want to learn. I knew and still know many who have fine talents and are most anxious to study; however, lacking means and a teacher, they cannot realize their ambition, but remain, as it were, forever desperately athirst.' (Trans. Alfred Mann; Dent.)

Fux's intention was to provide such 'young people who are most anxious to study' with a methodical practical introduction into the most completely worked-out system of composition which had existed up to his own lifetime. His designation of some of his contemporaries as 'unrestrainedly insane in their writings' proves that he did not regard the musical conditions of his own day as unified by a consistently worked-out system. Thus his own day could not provide the young composer with a firm foundation from which to develop. Fux based his 'Gradus ad Parnassum' on the style of Palestrina. The fact that he did not present the style quite correctly, that he disallowed some of the practices of the style and on the other hand introduced idioms of his own day which were foreign to it, does not detract from the debt which our musical culture owes to him. His method provided the correct solution of the problem in his day, and his application of it was entirely admirable in all but a few inessential details. Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Rossini, Cherubini, Berlioz, Meyerbeer, Chopin, Paganini, Mendelssohn, Liszt, and Brahms all learned counterpoint by working through the 'Gradus ad Parnassum'.

Among all these illustrious names that of J. S. Bach is conspicuously absent. Bach was already himself an experienced teacher when the 'Gradus' first appeared. It is known that, although he esteemed Fux as a composer, he did not agree with his method as a teacher. Bach's own method, which omitted all contact with the style of the sixteenth century, is, in my opinion, the correct way of teaching the harmony and counterpoint which forms the common basis of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century music. But the mastery of this type of harmony and counterpoint should not be considered the only technical study necessary to the composer of today, as Bach believed it to be as far as his own pupils were concerned. We shall return later to this point.

In the second half of the eighteenth and in the early nineteenth centuries the study of composition did not go outside the harmony of Rameau and the counterpoint of Fux as developed in the works of the student's immediate predecessors. There does not seem to have been any systematic study of musical form apart from fugue. Music of an earlier period was considered archaic. Beethoven knew of earlier styles only Bach's 'Forty-Eight' and some concerti grossi and oratorios of Handel. This situation was universal until, in the middle of the nineteenth century, Mendelssohn rediscovered the St. Matthew Passion. The effect of this rediscovery was to arouse interest in so-called 'free counterpoint', that of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. 'Strict counterpoint' became a special discipline. Text-books in both types of counterpoint as well as in harmony appeared in every country. Those in strict counterpoint multiplied the anachronisms of Fux at the whim of the particular author, those in free counterpoint claimed to expound Bach's practice



but hedged it about with abstract disallowances, either prompted by the author's personal predilections or made on grounds of pedagogic expediency, which in such cases was permitted to become the criterion of what to allow and what to forbid. There were exceptions, of course. Balakirev in his work with the Russian 'Five' introduced the revolutionary method of the formal and harmonic analysis of contemporary works, especially those of Liszt, Berlioz and Schumann. Late in the nineteenth century the study of sonata-form began.

This general method, if such it deserves to be called, sufficed in countries where there existed a flourishing and continuous national musical tradition—countries such as Germany, Austria, Italy, and France. The freshly developing nationalisms of Poland, Bohemia, and Russia had such vitality, and their music was so closely linked to the social life of the people, that their composers were able to strike out new paths, developed from their own folk-music and from the common European tradition, but not stifled by the latter. In Britain, however, harmful effects arose from the pervading influence of what had become an abstract Teutonism. Our musical life, dominated after the death of Purcell by continental practitioners, became in the late nineteenth century the prey of continental theory also, the influence of Germany being paramount. Frederick Corder at the Royal Academy of Music plunged his students into the ocean of Wagner. Sir Charles Stanford at the Royal College of Music taught the technique of Brahms, in whose works he believed music had reached its highest degree of organization, though at the same time he introduced the study of sixteenth-century counterpoint, attempting to return to the original sources and thus avoiding the mediation of Fux. He also tried to interest his students in Irish, Scottish, and English folk music, then being newly revealed.

\* \* \*

These were the conditions in which I, innocent of any theory but enamoured of musical art, began in 1918 my studies in composition with four years under Corder at the Royal Academy of Music. After this I became a pupil of Dr. John Ireland. When, in 1925, I started to teach composition myself, I was still enjoying the privilege of Dr. Ireland's stimulating instruction, which he showered generously upon many of our younger British composers. Looking back, I cannot but congratulate myself on my good fortune. Corder and Stanford were undoubtedly the greatest teachers of their generation in Britain, and through Dr. Ireland I received Stanford's tradition, handed on through the personality of one of our foremost creative musicians.

As a beginner in teaching my aim was to transmit such knowledge as I had acquired along the general lines practised by Dr. Ireland. But soon the chaos of musical life, which had been precipitated in 1895 by Debussy's masterpiece 'L'après-midi d'un faune', began to make itself felt even in Britain, which was in 1920 a relatively backward country in both the theory and practice of music. By 1930 we were aware of the fact that the more or less orderly and unified development of music through the seventeenth, eighteenth, and

nineteenth centuries was over. In its place was a chaotic conglomeration of musical styles, many of which had nothing in common, but all of which were in sharp contradiction to one or another of the basic principles of nineteenth-century music. The teaching of composition in general took a turn away from the study of the traditional disciplines of harmony and counterpoint. Students were subjected either to the idiosyncrasy of the particular teacher or to the dogmatism of one or another of the new systems of composition, which were propounded by rival theoreticians as methods of overcoming the musical crisis, but none of which has even yet achieved anything like general or even increasing acceptance. In these conditions some teachers contented themselves merely with trying not to interfere with the students' individualities; the latter were often taught no traditional disciplines, as they would not find them useful in the expression of their modern souls.

In these circumstances it seemed to me essential to devise a method of teaching composition which would equip the student with a mastery of technique, shield him from the idiosyncrasy of his teacher, and protect him from the otherwise overpowering influence of German music (and in the process from other only slightly less potent influences such as French impressionism and post-impressionism, Béla Bartók, and the cosmopolitan styles and theories of Stravinsky, Hindemith and Schönberg, all alike alien to the historical tradition of British music). I believe that I have now devised such a method, and I believe it to be the correct method of teaching and learning composition.

The object of my method is in general the same as that which inspired Fux in his 'Gradus', that is to say, to provide the 'young person who wants to learn' with a clear knowledge and practical mastery of the techniques of those past periods of musical history which achieved general acceptance in their day. In particular I pay attention to the development of our English music. But in carrying out the method I start earlier and finish later than Fux did. Thus instead of beginning with the sixteenth century I start with Gregorian plainchant, and proceed through the so-called strict or parallel organum to free organum, then through English discant to the developed polyphony of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. I introduce English folk music from the beginning of the course of study. A difficulty arises with the close of the sixteenth century. The period of transition between the disintegration of the modes and the final triumph of the major and minor scales contains many confusing features. It is unfortunate for this method—as far as English students are concerned—that Purcell falls into this period. It is possible, however, to use his chaconnes as examples of variation form. The harmony of the major and minor period must, however, it seems to me, be studied in the chorales of J. S. Bach. The next stage is therefore a systematic study of these, during which the whole harmonic vocabulary is learnt through Bach's own figured basses, and others worked out from his chorales. By the time he arrives at this stage the student, with his knowledge of sixteenth-century technique, will be able to take in his stride the added complications of Bach's style in its entirety. Bach's Inventions will

then provide the basis for the study of the eighteenth-century contrapuntal practice, leading to the study of fugue. The formal principles of the Vienna Classics up to and including Beethoven must then be mastered.

Thus the student will be spared for all time the deadening impact on his musical taste and enthusiasm of writing exercises such as are often set in textbooks today. In the first chapter of such books, one triad in root position follows another (a way of composing known only among the most primitive chorale composers such as Osiander, and never likely to return); in the next chapter but one, on the cadential and passing six-four chords, exercises appear in which the author has thoughtfully arranged for the latter harmony (fortunately a rarity in the classics) to appear with an unnatural frequency; and then, most absurd of all, come exercises on passing notes, where otherwise innocuous harmonic progressions are to be rendered fatuous by the addition of a continuous flow of insipid unessential notes. The overwhelming advantage of the historical method of study now becomes apparent. Throughout his study the composer is occupied solely with the creation of complete musical works instead of with a sort of potted music, which no composer of any period has ever dreamed of writing.

At the period of Beethoven I have hitherto called a halt. Armed with the technique and understanding of style which he has already acquired, the student is equipped to search for himself among the harmonic developments of the late nineteenth century and the theoretical and practical chaos of the twentieth. His early occupation with the styles up to the sixteenth century and with folk music will inoculate him against the otherwise overpowering impact of the German and Austrian music of the last two hundred and fifty years, which assails him daily as he practises his instrument and listens to concerts and operas.

It will be clear, I hope, that this method of studying composition is equally applicable—but with important modifications of practical detail—to students of any nationality. A French composer would substitute for English Discant and English folk song the organa of the Notre Dame school, Machaut and the early Netherland composers,

and French folk song; a Czech would pay special attention to the Hussite songs, the early Bohemian polyphonists, and Bohemian and Moravian folk songs. It will also be understandable and consequently, I hope, excusable that the entirely efficient application of the method remains yet to be made available. The working-out of the necessary theoretical and practical material is a not inconsiderable labour, which my other activities have not as yet allowed me to perform. It is a work in which collaborators would be most welcome. Perhaps the publication of this article may contribute towards the discovery of such interested colleagues.

I should like to make it clear that, in referring to the chaos of the twentieth century, I do not wish it to be inferred that I regard all the conflicting styles and methods of composing today as equally misguided. But it can hardly be disputed that neither of the two most influential and at the same time mutually contradictory musical theories of today, the twelve-tone system and Hindemith's theoretical re-establishment of tonality as a basic and therefore unavoidable ingredient in the fabric of musical art, has so far become a generally accepted method of composing, as were the methods analysed and given theoretical foundation by Zarlino and Rameau in their respective periods. Moreover, Schönberg and Hindemith cannot both be right; they may both be wrong or, as I believe, partially wrong. Out of this belief I have developed the particular technique which I have practised myself fitfully for the last twenty-seven and systematically for the last twelve years. But I exclude in principle my own technique of thematic composition from my general course as a teacher, since it has been my aim to devise a systematic method of learning composition which will render the student independent of his teacher's musical predilections. I likewise refrain in this article from entering into the field of today's basic musical controversies (of which the issue of Schönberg versus Hindemith is not the most fundamental), not because I regard such problems as either unimportant or insoluble, but because they are in principle outside the terms of reference which my treatment of the present subject prescribes.

#### British Council: Report for 1951-52

Among the concert tours and recitals sponsored by the Council during the year were an extensive Australian tour by the Griller String Quartet, a visit to Ankara by George Weldon and Moura Lympany, and a visit by Richard Lewis to Yugoslavia. Recordings made and already issued are Volume 2 of the *Anthology of English Church Music* (Columbia), Ireland's 'Mai Dun' (H.M.V.), *Anthology of Early English Keyboard Music* (Decca), Bliss's 'A Pastoral' (Decca), and (released since the Council's report was published) Michael Tippett's *Concerto for double string orchestra*. (H.M.V.)

The report of the Hallé Concerts Society for the year ended 31 July 1952 shows a deficit of £3,035. Grants and guarantees were £22,988, representing £3,672 more than in the previous year. The Arts Council gave £10,000 and the Manchester City Council is making an annual grant of £9,000 for three years.

#### Coronation March Competition

The New Zealand Broadcasting Service is offering a prize of £50 for a coronation march for brass band. Entries are limited to those living in New Zealand who were born in the country, or who arrived there before reaching the age of ten; those born outside New Zealand who have lived there for twenty years; and New Zealanders living overseas who left the country not more than five years before 2 February 1953 (closing date for entries). Particulars from the Librarian, New Zealand Broadcasting Service, P.O. Box 98, Wellington, N.Z.

#### University of Sydney

Centenary celebrations were held on 30 August, when selections from Handel's 'L'Allegro ed il Penseroso' were sung by the choir of the University Music School, with orchestra. Prof. D. R. Peart was the conductor.

## OF ORGANS AND ORGANISTS (ii)

## Is the Organ a Musical Instrument?

By GERAINT JONES

NO other instrument is perhaps as great a source of controversy as the organ, and yet there is no instrument to which the general musical public is so indifferent. The reasons for this indifference are not hard to seek. Orchestral concert programmes consist almost exclusively of music written during the last hundred and fifty years. But what did the great composers of this period write for the organ? Haydn and Mozart a few excellent pieces for a mechanical instrument; Schumann a handful of offerings primarily for a pedal-piano; Mendelssohn a few sonatas and preludes and fugues which simply cannot be compared with his orchestral music; Brahms some chorale preludes, and Liszt a few works which some admire and others loathe. From other composers the same period has given the organ repertory some works by César Franck, and a mountain of music by composers whose names signify little to non-organists, and whose music, with few honourable exceptions, signifies still less. From this group Reger and Rheinberger are excluded, and strenuous attempts made to find in their music the organist's substitute for the great romantic literature of other instruments. The late G. D. Cunningham once remarked that the mantle of Bach had fallen on Reger, clothing him in a strange superfluity of raiment—a description with which few will quarrel. As for Rheinberger, Dr. Harvey Grace will never persuade any non-organist that his twenty sonatas can really be compared as a body with Beethoven's piano sonatas. There is little doubt that the organ music of both of these composers would have fallen into the same neglect as the rest of their works had the greater composers been more obliging. Coming right down to the present day the grim fact emerges that, apart from Poulenc and Hindemith, there is scarcely a composer of international repute who has written any organ music, and it is only with the greatest difficulty that non-organist musicians can be persuaded to take the organ seriously at all.

This neglect of the organ is due to its fundamental unsuitability for the presentation of music requiring great expressiveness or subtlety, and no amount of ingenuity can ever make it otherwise. Until the advent of broadcasting the organist solved the problem of his repertory by making and playing transcriptions of other, especially orchestral, music, unless indeed he fancied himself as a composer. Most people had no opportunities of hearing an orchestra, and they came to his recitals. Organ builders made new, and altered existing, instruments, much as piano manufacturers had altered their pianos to accommodate them to the new demands of Liszt and Chopin. But with one vitally important difference—the new organ repertory was not really organ music at all, and organs became less and less suitable vehicles for the performance of true organ music. Organists of a generation or so earlier than my own are still playing these same transcriptions to dwindling

rows of old people, apparently oblivious of the fact that, thanks to the B.B.C., orchestras are now practically a domestic fixture, and the old solution of the organist's problem only makes him look ridiculous.

The truth is that this solution ignores the essential characteristics and style of the instrument, to which I have already referred. This is always fatal. I quote Parry's book, 'Style in Musical Art':

Differences in style are the outcome of the instinct for adaptation. In art the most perfect style is that which is most perfectly adapted to all the conditions of presentment. Many different factors minister to its development. The influences which are most obvious are the properties of material. If a work has to be executed in stone the particular qualities of the material necessitate a style of art different from that of works executed in iron. . . . The result of trying to imitate in one kind of material effects which can be produced in another which has quite different properties is either stupid or false in proportion to the dexterity of the worker. . . . There is a technique of life also, as well as of art, and the style of every section of society varies in accordance with its conditions; and the outcome of attempts to adopt a style belonging to one branch of society in a branch of society whose conditions of life are altogether different is a familiar form of what is called vulgarity.

When we come to apply these considerations to music we find circumstances of the same nature. All music must in the nature of things be written to be performed by instruments or voices; and they all have their particular idiosyncrasies. Organs have their special aptitudes and their special inaptitudes; and the music which is written for them, if it is to attain to any degree of artistic perfection, must be based on a recognition of that fact.

Now there is only one branch of the organ repertory which non-organist musicians regard as exhibiting an individual instrumental style. This is the music of Bach and his contemporaries and predecessors. In no other case is the appropriateness of the particular instrument so important as it is with this music. Bach's style depends more on clarity of texture than on any other single factor. His scoring for orchestra is quite different from that of later composers, precisely because their music does not depend only for its effect on the clarity with which interwoven melodies can be heard. Bach's orchestration is masterly because it achieves that clarity. His skill in writing for keyboard instruments is equally apparent when we hear his music on the instruments for which it was written. The complaint of the modern musician who loves his Bach but cannot understand why he wrote for the organ is invariably that he can never hear the movement of the parts when Bach is played on the modern organ. Here is a characteristic example, quoted from *The Gramophone* of August 1950:

The past quarter has brought us a number of considerable works by Bach in forms which seem to me to call for comment. Chiefly it is a case of Bach *versus* the modern organ. Ever since the invention of



that hideous Minotaur, the great nineteenth-century organ, executants like Rheinberger and Widor, intoxicated (it would seem) by the sheer weight of sound at their command, have poured out organ music in comparison with which Tchaikovsky's finales are mere tinkling cymbals. That is all very well for those who like it, but when it comes to registering Bach in the same manner, we must protest that a serious misconception has taken place.

The same musicians confronted with performances of Bach on appropriate instruments express themselves very differently, as I have myself found. This is not the occasion for a long and technical description of the organ of Bach and his contemporaries. Readers of Cecil Clutton and George Dixon's little book on the organ, or of W. L. Sumner's recent excellent and exhaustive treatise, will find there all the relevant facts. It is sufficient here to note that organs of three manuals and pedals with fifty or sixty stops, including pedal departments from 32-ft. stops to Mixtures, are found in Germany as far back as 1600. On each manual the stops were divided into two sections—narrow-scaled, comprising the main chorus of unisons and quints; and wide-scaled, comprising the corresponding members of the flute family. There were also reed stops of both families. The power of every rank, Flute, Principal (corresponding to our Diapason), or Reed, was practically identical. The flute family was essentially colouring material, and a great variety of sounds could be obtained from different combinations of these ranks. The organ at Steinkirchen, near Hamburg, on which I have made many recordings, is an excellent example of this type of instrument. These instruments, on very light wind pressure, all have a transparent quality of singing tone, and each pipe has an attack in its speech, corresponding to that imparted by the bow on stringed instruments, which gives a drive and vitality to the sound entirely lacking in modern instruments. It is this absence of bite which is responsible for the over-fast organ playing one now hears, and for the ineffectiveness of all slow music of the Baroque period when played on the modern organ.

I began by describing the organ as the most controversial of instruments. This is due to the almost total ignorance which prevails concerning the basic essentials of organ design as exemplified in the instruments which have survived from the Golden Age of organ music. An equal ignorance persists with regard to the style of this music. There are practically no organists in this country who perform, for example, the preludes and fugues of Bach in a manner which bears any coherent relation to the concerto grosso style of nearly every movement of this kind, involving the employment of properly contrasted manual choruses representing the tutti and soli of the orchestra. (The contrast to be obtained by changing from one manual to another, slightly different as to power and quality, is the only form of expression inherent in the organ.) Instead we are now treated to kaleidoscopic fortes and pianos, romantic crescendi and diminuendi, allied to a basic tone of an opacity that renders inaudible all contrapuntal detail, without which this music is stillborn. All these things are fiercely argued about—but they are not matters for argument. The data from which inevitable conclusions can be readily drawn are

available to any would-be learners. A study of the actual music will reveal the style: a study of the instruments will reveal how that style is adaptable to them. Even on the average modern instruments much can be done if the correct principles are applied. With the help of enlightened organ-builders much more would be possible.

If the organ is ever again to become an instrument of real musical significance, the builders' task is to provide for the re-educated organist a synthesis of the Classical and Romantic. All our organs are a medley of sounds, often excellent in themselves but never related to a specific whole with a musical purpose. The excellence of the so-called full swell or the strings, or the Tubas—all these are quite secondary. Consider just one example—the Albert Hall instrument. It boasts a number of excellent individual sounds. Yet for all its vast (and quite unnecessary) size, the disparity between the relative dynamics of its various flue choruses renders impossible an adequate performance of any major work by Bach, leaving aside entirely the question of the unsuitable colours of those choruses. Neither is there any real balance between the pedal and manual flue choruses. Indeed in view of the extraordinary variations in the dynamics of the manual choruses no pedal organ however large could hope to be adequate for this purpose. Moreover the flute mutation stops, which are the only entirely characteristic source of colour an organ possesses, however fine the quality of the reed stops, are entirely unrepresented in this mammoth instrument.

A comparison of this organ with the hundreds of organs, large and small, created by such a builder as A. Donald Harrison in America during the last twenty years is most instructive. Those on which I have played are instruments that could be created only by someone who knew and understood the organ repertory, classical, romantic and modern. Such a builder begins with the transparent tone of his Baroque Great Positiv and pedal divisions, and works outwards from there, taking such romantic accessories as are desirable and welding them into a consistent whole. Concluding a booklet describing a few characteristic instruments Donald Harrison writes: 'The concepts of their creation are inevitably tied together by one precious thread—a regard for the music'.

If our organ builders could be imbued with this spirit, and organists cultivated an understanding of that music which alone worthily represents the instrument, the great gulf between the organ and the mainstream of music which now exists could be bridged. Organists and organ-builders must cease to fool themselves, and, accepting the limitations inherent in the true organ style, must strive not for popularity (for this style cannot court that, even if it were desirable) but the respect of the discerning music-lover, who as never before is coming to an appreciation of that period of music in which the organ claims instrumental pre-eminence.

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One of the series of recitals and talks at Harrods store entitled 'The Listening Hour' was given by Susi Jeans (harpsichord) and W. and E. de Blaise (flutes). The harpsichord used was built by W. de Blaise.

# The Galpin Society

By GERALD HAYES

ONE of the most remarkable revolutions in musical taste, so silent that it is taken for granted by the present generation, is the acceptance today of the importance of early instrumental music as played on the contemporary instruments in their proper technique. It is hard to believe that as recently as 1930 these things had to be fought for with apostolic fervour against an established opinion firmly entrenched in a century of careless ignorance. But although this change came with increasing momentum in the inter-war years, we must not forget the pioneers who, more than sixty years ago, were searching out these forgotten instruments and studying them, for it is from those men that all the later developments derive.

Among those early workers, the late Canon Francis Galpin must always be remembered as the man who did more than anyone else to interest the largest number of people in the widest possible field of instruments of the past: his enthusiasm for collecting began young, and he has recorded how he captured his first Serpent while still an undergraduate at Cambridge. For the rest of his long life he devoted his leisure to amassing a collection of every form of early instrument and to making the results of his researches available in articles and books: in 1910 he published his famous book on 'Old English Instruments of Music' which remains an indispensable handbook for all interested in the subject, although later research suggested to him a few modifications that appear in his subsequent works. If he could not find old examples to fill gaps in his collection, he had replicas made—some, indeed, he made with his own hands; but his flair for finding the genuine instruments made these expedients necessary only in a few cases of excessive rarities. The collection, specially rich in wind instruments, thus became a conspectus of that aspect of early music, and the generous welcome he gave to all who were seriously interested had a wide influence on the recent developments in this field.

Contemporary with Canon Galpin and, in a way, complementary to him, the late Arnold Dolmetsch was the other great figure that blazed the trail. The spirit of the collector and antiquarian was quite foreign to Dolmetsch's practical mind: he cared little whether a thing was new or old so long as it was good, and it was the discovery that much of the neglected, and even forgotten, early instrumental music was supremely good that led him to devote sixty years of his long life to its recovery and proper performance. He realized that all this music was conditioned by its instruments, and that it could never be appreciated at its proper value unless it was played as the composers intended. For a long while his interests were confined to stringed instruments, chiefly those bowed and those with a keyboard: it is to him, and him alone, that we owe the acceptance of the fact, so obvious today yet so unthinkable a bare half-century ago, that the viols and violins are radically different instruments. Except for the outstanding recovery of the recorder, relatively late in his career,

he had little to do with research on wind instruments.

It would be unfair to suggest that only these two men showed interest in the subject between 1890 and 1920: there were two or three isolated groups that gave concerts on the old instruments, but these usually showed an uncritical sentimentality of approach combined with a curious inability to realize that they were playing anything but modern instruments in a strange shape. These recitals may have led a few to inquire more seriously into the subject, but in the main these small groups had very little influence on the trend of musical ideas: it is to Galpin and Dolmetsch that the chief debt is due.

After the second world war a few players of the early instruments felt that the time had come when such scattered interests should have a focal point of research and a medium for the exchange of ideas. The net was spread, and soon a nucleus of membership was found large enough to justify the formation of a society. It was to be a society that should cater for all types of interest, for the scholar, the maker, the player, and the collector, with the proviso that in anything with which the society was connected only the highest standards would be tolerated. It is noteworthy that the founders of the society were mostly of a younger generation than those who had fought the battles of the 1920's and 1930's, and it was lucky that a high proportion of them were wind-instrument enthusiasts, for the early wind instruments had not received the detailed research already done in the field of strings. The catholicity of his outlook and the memory, both personal and through his books, of Canon Galpin's influence, at once suggested his name for the society, and with the consent of his family it was adopted—an act conferring honour on the society and perpetuating his name in the connection he would most have wished. So, in October 1946, the Galpin Society was formally constituted. As was fitting, Mrs. Arnold Dolmetsch became one of the first vice-presidents; and the membership quickly showed that, whatever their original source of inspiration, all those genuinely interested found this society to fill a real need. Under the presidency of Prof. J. A. Westrup, the society was assured of active support and guidance from the highest authority.

The Galpin Society may be said to have established its position firmly with the issue of the first number of its *Journal* in March 1948: the scope of the matter and the standard of scholarship shown in this made it clear that no library or musical institution of any standing could afford to be without this publication on its shelves. The Society's rules allowed for the membership of corporate bodies, and very soon universities, colleges and libraries not only in Great Britain, but on the Continent and in America, applied for membership; and this form of membership is steadily growing. So far five numbers of the *Journal* have appeared, and a sixth is in preparation. It is not possible to list here all the articles that have appeared, but the *Journal* has begun, in

three of its issues, a detailed examination, for the information of students, of all the descriptions of musical instruments given in a manuscript at Christ Church, Oxford, by a certain James Talbot, who must have compiled it some time between 1690 and 1700: as previously no work of this kind was known in the period extending from 1636 until 1767, these precise measurements and notes are of the utmost value for a most important period of English music. This manuscript will continue to be analysed in later issues.

Meanwhile the society continues its winter and summer meetings where members bring their latest 'finds' and discuss their special interests, while the performance of some piece on its contemporary instruments adds to the appeal of the gathering. These semi-social functions have proved not only very popular with members, but most valuable for the exchange of information and for co-ordination of research work. Frequent bulletins are issued by which members are kept informed of the activities of the society and of each other.

The Festival of Britain in 1951 inspired the

Galpin Society to its most ambitious effort so far. This was the collection and exhibition in London of a comprehensive display of British musical instruments up to the mid-nineteenth century. No such exhibition had been held in Great Britain since that organized by the Worshipful Company of Musicians in 1904, and with the standard of that famous collection in mind the society realized how formidable a task it had undertaken. The results, however, fully proved the calibre of the Galpin Society; for labour, detective work, and enthusiasm brought together a collection unsurpassed in its representative completeness. The earliest work shown was the famous Warwick Castle Gittern of about 1330 and the latest a Piano-Organ made for the Great Exhibition of 1851. Altogether there were 606 exhibits, including the earliest known English harpsichord (dated 1622), the famous Chester set of recorders by Bressau, cornetts dating from 1518, and remarkably complete sets of wood-wind showing every stage of development.



THE SOCIETY'S 1951 EXHIBITION

Keyboard instruments made by British craftsmen between 1622 and 1851, and (on facing page) clarinets dating from 1765 onward, on show at the Arts Council's headquarters.



The exhibition occupied part of the ground floor and nearly all the first floor of the Arts Council's premises in St. James's Square, and proved so popular that its closing date had to be postponed. Sir Steuart Wilson opened the exhibition, and the B.B.C. publicized it not only in newsreels and special broadcasts, but also by a thirty-minute television programme. Finally—a special triumph—*Punch* devoted an illustrated article to the collection. The galleries were thronged, and those who had volunteered to be present on explanatory duty were overwhelmed with questions. Only those who have had experience of gathering together an important collection from all over Great Britain, and of arranging all the details of transport, insurance, display, and catalogue, can appreciate how well the Galpin Society stood up to this major test. Its reward lay in the knowledge that it had given an educative background to musicians such as had not been seen for nearly half a century.

The success of its exhibition, while providing a useful stimulus to membership, has inspired the society to further projects. While the work on the *Journal* continues, and the next winter meeting is in active preparation, a book on musical instruments, as a work of co-operation by the best experts in the society, is in an advanced stage of planning, and the society hopes to have a vigorous



part in certain important international congresses scheduled for the coming years. But with all these activities, the Galpin Society still stands firmly by its principal slogan: 'play the work as the composer intended it should be played'. Only those who think they have gone furthest on that road realize how much work lies ahead in the task of doing justice to old instruments and their music. It is by the co-operative and friendly spirit of the members of the Galpin Society that the task will finally be achieved.

## The Musician's Bookshelf

'Opera for the People.' By Herbert Graf

[University of Minnesota Press; O.U.P., 40s.]

Herbert Graf, born in Vienna, has won success as stage director both at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, and at various European festivals. In addition, he is head of the Metropolitan's television productions department. He writes, therefore, with authority. His book is really two books: it documents operatic activity in present-day America, and it gives the author's views (with ample historical background) on opera production and on the place of opera in the community. The documentation is detailed, and assembles conveniently much information which

has hitherto been accessible only in scattered sources. It is as far up to date as last year's production of Douglas Moore's 'Giants in the Earth' at Columbia University, though there is no mention of an event of equal interest which took place some months earlier—the presentation, for the first time in America, of Dallapiccola's 'Il Prigioniero' by the Juilliard School of Music, New York. The picture presented of the social organization of opera now needs amendment in one important respect: exemption from the federal admissions tax (entertainments duty) of twenty per cent has recently been granted at last to non-profit musical enterprises, thus easing substantially the whole financial burden borne by professional opera in America.

Mr. Graf is convinced that opera must cease to be 'grand opera' and must instead come to terms with 'musical theatre'. It must seek roots in the community at large instead of among a limited class of patrons, and its performances must set themselves to achieve those standards of dramatic verisimilitude and theatrical expertness to which audiences have become accustomed through plays, 'musicals', and films. Such a view, naturally linked with the advocacy of opera in English, has been made familiar in Britain by Prof. Edward J. Dent and others; but Mr. Graf's statement of the case still reads freshly and powerfully. He makes the particularly valuable point that, when audiences are prevented by the language barrier from appreciating opera by proper dramatic criteria, then the false criteria of performers' virtuosity are all they have to fall back on. So it arose that Lotte Lehmann gave up singing Elisabeth in 'Tannhäuser' because she could not securely reach the high B at the end of the 'Hallen' aria; true, Wagner allowed G as an alternative, but she found that anyone singing this note was invariably 'marked down' by audiences.

The book has some illuminating discussion of television opera, but the author's remarks on the cinema are somewhat vitiated by the surprising sentence: 'It seems beyond dispute that the motion picture is an ideal medium for the performance of opera.' The truer view is surely that, on the contrary, the artistic force of the cinema is largely to be measured by the extent to which it has cut loose from the theatre (whether the musical or non-musical theatre is here irrelevant) and has established methods and canons of its own. Most of what Mr. Graf says, however, carries considerable weight by drawing on a combination of thorough academic training, great practical experience, and sturdy common sense. He has also assembled in this book 104 excellent photographic illustrations; one of them, representing a performance of 'Carmen' by the All-Children's Opera Company of Chicago, is a fearful object-lesson.

ARTHUR JACOBS.

### 'The Ladder to Paganini's Profound Mastery.' By Michael Zacharewitsch

[Obtainable from Novello, 25s.]

### 'The Art of Playing on the Violin.' By Francesco Geminiani. Edited with an Introduction by David D. Boyden

[Oxford University Press, 16s.]

Mr. Zacharewitsch, whose reputation as a violinist we all know, seems to imply through the title and the order of the examples in his 'book-method' that a violinist will acquire the necessary 'profound mastery' of Paganini *after* he has practised such concertos as those of Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn, Mozart, and Elgar, of which extracts are here reproduced with the author's bowings and fingerings. Only the Khachaturian and Prokofiev examples occur after

the Paganini caprices in these pages. If this is to suggest that the Paganini caprices have opened the door to modern violin technique, well and good; I entirely agree with this view. But to publish extracts from the concertos before the Paganini examples nevertheless seems to be putting the cart before the horse. In the course of the text there are also some curious assertions: on page 13 the author states that he is in full agreement with Mr. Salzedo's explanation of the Paganini 'method', but on page 2 we learn that Paganini 'left no method'.

In going through the whole book the student may find some very good 'tips', although these are scattered rather haphazardly. Personally I have always thought that one of Paganini's most precious contributions to violin technique is his fingering of the ascending chromatic scale in one of his caprices as 0-1-2-1-2-3-4 — 0-1-2-1-2-3-4 etc., instead of the usual 0-1-1-2-2-3-4. This provides a clearer and faster execution of semitone passages through a shift of the first finger, which can be accomplished very easily. This discovery was probably made by Paganini through his playing of the guitar, on which slides of semitones are rendered impossible because of the frets on the fingerboard, necessitating a different finger for each semitone. Yet Mr. Zacharewitsch, dealing with chromatic fingerings, suggests 1-2-3-2-3-4, the shift being thus performed by the second finger instead of the first—which is not so easy and, I should say, not so good as Paganini's fingering. In Bach's Prelude in E major (p. 17, lines 10-11) the fingering of the slurred semitones should certainly be across the strings, not on one string as the author advocates; for it is pretty certain that Bach had in mind the technique inaugurated by Vivaldi in corresponding passages of some of his string concertos. (Similarly on p. 18, line 3.)

The facsimile edition of Geminiani's treatise is certainly a very interesting way of reviving an important work on technique as it was when first published in 1751. It is still illuminating, for certain ideas usually thought of as modern discoveries are only a revival of something our forefathers had thought of long ago. On the other hand one finds that Geminiani advocates, in some exercises for the bow, that the player should employ the wrist much, the arm but little, and the shoulder not at all! This is far behind what modern bow-technique has taught us, probably in order to be able to perform modern music in the right way. I cannot imagine a violinist performing such a work as the César Franck sonata using these bowing principles of Geminiani's. There are also some very touching and revealing remarks in some examples (e.g. no. XIII) about what is termed an 'affecting discourse'—meaning how to deal with the expression of the music one plays. One discovers that in those days an 'espressivo' rendering had to include all the 'frills' of the period: all sorts of trills, appoggiaturas, mordents, grace-notes, and so on. I understand the need for all this in playing a keyboard instrument on which, for example, it was necessary to play a trill to sustain a long note (as in Bach); but, on a stringed instrument with the use of vibrato in the left hand (which Pugnani calls the 'close shake') and the inflexion of tone produced by the modern bow, one would think that it was not necessary to have recourse to all

these ornamentations in order to produce expression in a *cantabile* melody.

We learn that, according to Geminiani, to express 'fury, anger or resolution' you use a trill (which he calls a *beat*) played 'with strength and continued long'; the same trill played 'less strong and shorter', expresses 'mirth, satisfaction', etc. But if you play it quite softly, and swell the note, the trill may then denote 'horror, fear, grief, lamentation' and so forth. By making the trill short and swelling the note gently, the player may express 'affection and pleasure'. This is all charming, though slightly odd. It looks as if Geminiani is a little confused between the composer and the performer; but as he himself was both, it seems very natural that he should write an essay on technique in this way.

David D. Boyden's introduction is full of care and good sense. But what exactly does he mean when he says that the 'treatises of the eighteenth century are meaningless or misleading when studied apart from the instruments of the time'? We know that Stradivarius died fourteen years before this Geminiani treatise was published, and left perfect instruments which have not been improved upon since. What instruments, therefore, can Mr. Bowden be referring to? As for the bow, Tartini's bow in 1740 had a screw to regulate the tension of the hair, and therefore Geminiani must also have used such a bow. Finally, the assertion that the chromatic fingering with a separate finger for each semitone had to be rediscovered in the twentieth century by Joseph Achron and expounded by Carl Flesch is erroneous, since Paganini (d. 1840) used it freely in his Caprices—probably (as we have remarked) because he was used to fingering chromatic scales thus on the guitar.

ANDRÉ MANGEOT.

### 'Jacobus Vaet and his Motets.' By Milton Steinhardt

[Michigan State College Press;  
Oxford: Blackwell, 25s.]

Dr. Steinhardt, who is now Associate Professor of Musicology in the University of Kansas, has done a great service to all students of sixteenth-century music by publishing so careful and detailed a study of Vaet's motets. It is not that the name of this mid-sixteenth-century Flemish composer calls up for us one of the major geniuses in the field of Renaissance polyphony: on the contrary, he is little known except to those who are fortunate enough to possess the works of scholarship by Commer and Maldeghem. Three motets are, however, available in 'Das Chorwerk' and it is greatly to the credit of Dr. Steinhardt that he includes in his book three more—'Domine exaudi', 'Ecce apparebit Dominus', and 'Antevenis virides'. These, in an excellent modern transcription which is the work of the author, serve to show Vaet's stylistic development during the comparatively short period of twenty years which enfolded his entire creative output. A second appendix, equally valuable, gives a thematic index of Vaet's motets together with succinct indications

of both early and modern printed texts. The very few gaps that occur in this index are due to the non-availability of part-books (other than the *Bassus*) of Vaet's 'Flandri Modulationes', the only early source which was entirely devoted to compositions by him.

He was, according to Dr. Steinhardt, a transitional figure; for he was born at about the same time as Palestrina and Lassus, both of whom outlived him by twenty-seven years, yet perhaps the greatest influence on him was the music of Nicolas Gombert, who was for some time a canon of the Church of Notre Dame in Courtrai where Vaet received his earliest musical training. What happened to him between the Courtrai period and the time when he became master of the court chapel of Maximilian II is not known, but he probably continued his studies either privately or at one of the Universities in the Low Countries. At the end of his seven-year stretch of travel and study, Vaet leapt into prominence as musical director of the then newly-constituted royal chapel in Vienna. There he became acquainted with the latest works of Lassus, for friendly relations existed between the courts of Vienna and Munich, and the two musicians must often have met.

Many of the motets that Vaet composed in the course of his duties were not strictly liturgical at all: some were religious whilst being outside the scope of the liturgy, and others were frankly secular. The latter class includes occasional music for important Hapsburg happenings, and Dr. Steinhardt studies the texts in the light of their historical significance. This is an extremely important branch of musical study, and has often suffered from sad neglect, especially where our own Tudor composers are concerned. It is reassuring, therefore, to find a serious outlook and a thorough investigation wherever there is a question of textual significance in the present study. There is ample documentation throughout, and all extracts are printed in double columns, with the original on the left and a translation on the right.

The author has devoted great care to his analyses of the motets, but has unfortunately been persuaded to leave all the musical illustrations to the end of the book, thus giving rise to a great deal of turning back and forth. This is a small blemish, however, on a fine piece of book-production, the interest and usefulness of which is considerably heightened by a well-organized index and bibliography. The chapters on Form, Chronology of Style, and Parody Technique are particularly valuable, and will convince most readers that Vaet is a composer to be studied with all due care and respect. It is high time that more of these Renaissance musicians benefited from thorough studies such as this, instead of being mentioned casually in otherwise authoritative history books.

DENIS STEVENS.

### Books Received

*Mention in this list neither implies nor precludes review in a future issue.*

'Introduction to English Folklore.' By Violet Alford. Pp. 164. Bell, 12s. 6d.

'My History of Music.' By Irene Gass. Pp. 128. Evans Bros., 7s. 6d.

\* Distributed in England by Novello.



- 'Puccini.' A biography by George R. Marek. Pp. 299. Cassell, 21s.
- 'Immortal Bohemian.' An intimate memoir of Giacomo Puccini. By Dante del Fiorentino. Pp. 232. Gollancz, 12s. 6d.
- 'Mozart in Salzburg.' A study and guide by Max Kenyon. Pp. 225. Putnam, 21s.
- 'Alice in Music Land.' Adventures in the land of harmony. By Ernest La Prade. Pp. 136. Bodley Head, 8s. 6d.

- 'The Thematic Process in Music.' By Rudolph Reti. Pp. 362. New York: Macmillan Company.
- 'Pleasures in Music.' An anthology of writing about music and musicians from Cellini to Bernard Shaw. Edited and with an Introduction by Jacques Barzun. Pp. 520. Michael Joseph, 21s.
- 'Carl Nielsen: Symphonist, 1865-1931.' By Robert Simpson. Pp. 236. Dent, 21s.
- 'Listening to Music. A Guide to Enjoyment.' By Roger Fiske. Pp. 64. Harrap, 8s. 6d.

## Round about Radio

By W. R. ANDERSON

A B.B.C. boon is the diversity of expositors and interpreters offered us. The terms may be differentiated, I think; take, for example, Bach. On some days one may feel a wish for the coldest laying-forth of the contrapuntal facts of the 'Forty-Eight'; on another day, 'interpretation' may be nearer to the heart's desire. We have the advantage of the harpsichord's factual figurations, as well as the admirable control in such piano performances as James Ching gives. Around players of the past, memory casts its halo, inevitably: one thinks of Harold Samuel's ingratiating curves (ideally suggested in that gaily perceptive caricature by Kapp). Musing on the possibilities of that form of interpretation which reads into music a commentary upon life, I took occasion, the 'Ring' being on tap lately from Bayreuth recordings, to re-read Shaw's 'The Perfect Wagnerite', and the additional suggestions made in 'The Reality of Music' by Boughton, who sees the characters as types of various views of the moral ordering of life. Parallels may be drawn (but not, probably, by the B.B.C.) between Wagner's philosophy and the stiffer varieties of it being practised today, when Siegfried the hero still goes daily to his death in frustration. In the 'Götterdämmerung' performance some strong dramatic force came through from Siegfried (Lorenz, with a weakening wobble), an exceptionally vivid Waltraute (Siewert), a keen sardonic Hagen (Greindl), and, indeed, a worthy cast in general. I had to leave Wagner for the George Edwardes programme (no disrespect to Richard, but there are other sorts of joy). This hour was at first intended as a centenary tribute, but the B.B.C. discovered later (what I could have told it years ago) that Edwardes was born in 1855, not 1852—this being a point in the theatre lore the collecting of which, with accompanying playbills, programmes, and souvenirs, is my old-age hobby (one, of course, which has many musical connections). It is time, by the way, that we had a good history of British musical comedy, now run to seed through enfeebling communications with and contamination by three or four elements which some day I may perhaps be permitted to consider at decent length in other columns than these. 'Oklahoma!', 'Brigadoon,' and the other new brands have their attractions, but they are far from the old standards of British musical comedy which I remember over a half-century. On this evening the ghosts were superficially gay, but the sense of the stage, never strong in B.B.C. doings, was dim. One sign of that is the tendency to take the songs too fast. Haste in rushing through contemporary ditties is

in order, for me: of most of them I say, the sooner over the better; but ballads with more shape, fun, style and originality deserve a richer spread of sail.—Here, while tune-and-heart are remembered, is the place for a salute to another master of melody, Roger Quilter, on passing the three-quarter-century mark: in light opera and song a sweetly persuasive master, he has given pleasure in every note he has written. Concert habits change, but happily the day of the best art-ballad is never likely to close in eternal night.—A word of thanks, too, for Vittorio Gui's distinguished orchestration of Franck's 'Prelude, Aria and Finale'—another classic of heart-music which I was delighted to hear given this additional chance to thrive in new affections.

John Addison's overture 'Heroum Filii' ('Sons of Heroes') was written for the college at which he was educated—one, I gather, specializing in training for military purposes. The music is spirited but rather uneasily gaunt, even ghostly in its quietest parts: perhaps suggesting the military prospects before us.—More ingratiating was Koechlin's 'Baliade' for piano and orchestra (nineteen and a half minutes). It has the poise and dignity of the best French art, and includes an impressive epilogue in mediaeval-ecclesiastical style.—Among the quiet pleasures has been the series of samples from Burl Ives's collection of American folk song. These, given with sensible, attractive comments, seem to represent the best kind of simple, natural presentation of ballads, avoiding the common fault of prettifying or stagifying these unfoldings of life.—Another glimpse of other folks' ways, which from personal experience I could at once check and the more keenly enjoy, was the Rodgers-Brown 'Kerry Fair', neatly described as a 'wicker-work of talk, song and dance' woven around the idea in the title. I do not know if much has yet been done in the vast matter of comparing the world's folk music. Doubtless more than one Ph.D. is on the way to being won in this field. It has struck me that some of the (to us) queerer slants and slides of Irish folk melody have points of similarity to those of the Bantu. These strange primitive expressions may well be common to a greater part of the world's population than many people know: yet another suggestion of the elements of endless interest and humour that mankind has in common.

Dupré's 'Symphonie-Passion' was played with capital clarity by that uncommonly clarifying

organist Charles Spinks, whom I am glad to hear now more frequently. I enjoy French naivety, but along with that there is here a good deal of unconvincing, rather tortuous discord and some monotony of rhythmic patterns in a four-movement work lasting over twenty-five minutes. It may be that the choice of the Crucifixion and Resurrection episodes—indeed, the whole subject—is a mistake.—One of the best hours of eighteenth-century music, mostly light, was that given in aristocratic style by the Dutch Harpsichord Trio (Feltkamp, a sparkling flautist, Lentz, a richly sustaining exponent of the viola da gamba's delicacies, and van Wering, the ideal keyboard partner). These experts will be heartily welcome again.

I listen with respect, though with little increase of interest, to the products of the immensely prolific Villa-Lobos. Two of his 'Bachianas Brasileiras' were given by Victoria de los Angeles and a chamber group. In the suites so entitled the accompaniment is written for different combinations. There, the composer may have had a thought of Bach's diversity in the Brandenburgs; but the main reason for the bold use of the master's name seems to be the attempt to use his contrapuntal methods in dealing with native melodic styles. No. 1 (eighteen minutes) has an introduction, a prelude and a feeble fugue; no. 5 (a little over eleven minutes) has only two movements. I don't much see where Bach comes in, especially in no. 5. As ever when a composer uses native turns of speech, the tunes seem to the foreigner inconsequential: but I am afraid this is a basic defect of Villa-Lobos the composer. He handles a tune of slow sentiment nicely, but I feel that the use of the name 'Bach' in such products is ill-advised.—Racine Fricker's one-movement quartet (fourteen and a half minutes) was played by the Amadeus. It is mostly lively; there are lots of sharp rhythmic attacks and a seemingly good disposition of parts, but as always I found very little to take away and remember in this music-spinning, which is a little like early Bloch, though lacking his vision and melodic pull. When one of our darker contemporaries shall leave a ringing melody with us, I shall feel like using an entire page of this magazine to celebrate the marvel.—Less stiff is John Gardner, whose first symphony was re-heard (close on forty minutes). It seems long, rather plodding, and harmonically tiring. Amid plenty of vigour and outcry, amid which a few Russian overtones can be felt, he is inclined to swamp his ideas with orchestration.—Tunes, a few minutes later, were all the go, when Randi Helseth, a pure, ingratiating soprano, sang Grieg songs in Norwegian. The excellent piano partner was Johan Oian. Earlier, Clara Haskil had stylishly exhibited the remarkable diversity of Scarlatti's quirks in his harpsichord sonatas.

Nicolas Nabokov's 'La Vita Nuova' (three excerpts after Dante) is described as a concerto for soprano and tenor solos and orchestra. This, given by the Hallé (Weldon) is twenty-one minutes of rather heavy, at times treacly music, in eclectic styles, not very determinate. In the more 'ad-

vanced' moments there is some small likeness to Shostakovich, but the idiom is usually simpler. It struck me as a work likely to appeal to the Three Choirs. It is difficult to make recitative impressive nowadays, especially when this kind of poetry has to be set. One or two other novelties came in a 'New Music' hour. The Malcolm Arnold flute sonatina will pass, and Stanley Bate's songs to Joyce's words seem worth re-hearing, with more of the words, if possible, audible. The other work of this hour I forbear to criticize: it seemed to me beneath notice, on any event. I cannot imagine how these programmes are chosen; but then, the longer I live with (yet, thank heaven, not in) the B.B.C., the more I marvel at its life-habits.

A Radio Italiana recording gave us Verdi's sixth opera, 'I Due Foscari' (1844), the 'lyric tragedy' of a noble's father's sacrifice of his son. There are scenes in prison and *en fête*, but the tragic note is naturally predominant. The shrewd composer, writing about a decade later, after 'Il Trovatore' and 'La Traviata', said that he realized the danger of monotony—the one-motive work. 'Ten years ago I should not have dared to write "Rigoletto" with its 'very powerful situations, variety, spirit, pathos'. Want of pluck is about the last weakness with which anyone would charge Verdi. He always knew what he wanted, and never failed in whole-hearted conviction. That is a quality I feel so rarely in music written today. I would not accuse the composers of insincerity: that would be absurd. They scarcely ever confide in us in words, and the music itself as rarely carries conviction, either by fire, the sword-thrust of poignance, or the melting appeal of harmonic beauty. It is because an artist like Bloch can thus move one, and is also a philosopher, that I call him a great man, while rarely feeling able to say more about the great majority of other and newer comers than the comment ascribed to Henry James after he had met some 'modern' young ladies: 'One of the little wantons had a certain cadaverous charm'.

To throw still a little more light on what real artists are after, there was the partially lost opportunity of hearing Charlie Chaplin; the loss lying in that dreadful plan (whoever devised it ought to be whipped) of letting three or four interlocutors darken counsel and mush up the meeting. Thus beset and foolishly badgered, I thought Charlie made a wonderful shot at telling what art is, how it is engendered and how expressed. He was polite about Hollywood, but the sting in some of his phrases could be felt: far less, though, than would have been justified by the recent abominable treatment by infatuated fear-ridden morons of one of the ripest artists this country has produced. He insisted upon freedom, invention, exploration, change, the personal dream, and that quality which endears—the humanity, the sympathy for the under-dog, the practical kindness that shine through all the antics, follies, and frustrations of the little man. Now, contemporary composers, what about putting more of these qualities into your music?

## New Choral Music

O.U.P. [continued from November issue]

For mixed choirs: Armstrong Gibbs's 'Spring' (Nashe) has the expected sparkle: it is easy for those who can neatly move. Also for S.A.T.B. is his anthem, 'Bless the Lord', also easy. You may like the final cadence more and more as the years pass; or you may not. Dr. Gibbs always has something a little fresh for us. This anthem is also issued in the 'Easy' series, for S.A. (to be sung, if desired, by T.B.). Alec Rowley's 'Let all the World' (poem by George Herbert) also has its bold strokes, of key and rhythm, strong in heart. Gordon Jacob: Twenty-Third Psalm: just a little fine tuning asked, in this enjoyable 'Easy' setting. In the same category comes his 'O Lord, I will praise Thee', in dignified *maestoso* style. Carols (still S.A.T.B.): R. Jacques, 'As Joseph', a glowing, quiet song from the Oxford Book; Sargent's arrangement of a French melody, 'Carol of Beauty', is better known to many in its 'Beggar's Opera' form as the roistering 'Fill every glass'. Here it is 'Praise we the Lord': so various are the ends that good tunes can serve. Another of Sargent's fixings is the tune of 'Greensleeves', to 'The old year now away is fled'; and finally comes Elizabeth Poston's cantata 'The Nativity', a sequence of a dozen carols, with solo parts for S.A. (or counter-tenor), M.-S., T. and B. (for the last three a semi-chorus can be substituted if desired). The duration is about half an hour: the price 6s. 6d. (strings score and parts on hire). The S. and A. parts of the choir are occasionally divided. There is no elaboration: the work is attractively contrived (Terence Tiller has compiled and edited the words), and should give keen pleasure to all who partake.

The Faith Press sends a carol-anthem by H. V. F. Somerset, 'Let all rejoice': a plain hymn-like theme, with a dancing instrumental interlude, on a familiar ancient dotted-note rhythmical figure. This can be played on the keyboard, or by two violins and a cello. This firm issues good examples of Schütz's motets: 'They that sow in tears' (S.S.A.T.B.) and 'The heavens are telling' (S.S.A.T.T.B.), edited by Steinitz and Menzies (1s. 6d. each copy, in fine big print). The power of a melisma or a suave, eloquent rhythm is eminent. We ought to sing more Schütz.

Augener.—Avril Coleridge-Taylor's 'All is Beauty' is a graceful S.S. nature-sketch, with but a few chromatics. J. Longmire's 'Cradle Song' (S.S.A. and piano) has a good deal of varied colour, and T. B. Pitfield's 'Pilgrim Song'—the oft-set Bunyan words—for S.A.T.B. and organ or piano, is appropriately broad in phrasing and spirit.

Joseph Williams.—Chaminade still charms, I hope. 'The Fate of the Roses' (S.S.) is a dainty tasting-sample: slowish, in delicate quick little phrase-figurings. The old-timers loved the voice: that goes a long way, in such pieces as Goring Thomas's 'Night Hymn at Sea' (Mrs. Hemans), a pleasing S.S. study in arpeggio curves. Martin Shaw is happily still active at 76. His 'Song of Callices' (poem by Matthew Arnold) is for S.S.A. and piano, *allegro con fuoco*—music vigorous and tender as the ancient visions pass. There is a gentle revival of interest in the most tuneful eighteenth-century worthies—Hook, Dibdin, and the like. Alec Rowley's deft arrangements come aptly, then, for unaccompanied choirs, now S.S.A., again S.A.T.B. The present packet contains two of the former, Holcombe's 'Sweet Content' and Hook's 'Young Lubin', and two of the latter: Hook's 'He piped so sweet' and Dibdin's 'Buxom Nan'. The styles vary from the gently meditative to the swiftly gay. Choirs with good pictorial powers will enjoy these settings, which never present sharp difficulties. For male voices and piano is Alan Bush's distinguished piece 'The Dream of

Llewelyn ap Gruffydd' (Welsh and English words; 2s.). This vivid depiction of the grand vision of Gwalia's last prince is strongly impelled, with a binding, bounding rhythm. No soloist is necessary, though if a baritone be available there is a short part which he might well enjoy colouring. There is nothing to tangle a choir, and much to excite its best powers.

Ashdown.—Henry Geehl has arranged some familiar tunes for S.S.: Mendelssohn's 'I waited for the Lord', 'The Twelve Days of Christmas', and Luther's very simple carol 'Away in a Manger'; there is also a T.T.B.B. version of Tchaikovsky's song 'Don Juan's Serenade', giving useful melody-and-accompaniment practice.

Lengnick.—Rubbra's op. 76 consists of 'Three Motets' (unaccompanied S.A.T.B.). These are 'Let us now praise famous men', 'There is a Spirit' and 'Except the Lord build the house'. Here and there is some division of the various parts. I don't always see the point in Rubbra's writing; its starkness is effective, but the indecisive end of no. 1 seems less so. This piece is on a persistent pedal note. The composer seems to be writing a great deal, not all of it very impressive, as I hear it. Choirmasters would do well, however, not to neglect the work of this serious-minded, energetic composer.

Elkin.—Some bright, obviously appealing unison songs by old hands: Harry Brook (a *scherzando* 'Song of the Poplars') and Markham Lee (the broad-flowing 'London River'); and 'The Deil's awa' (arr. by A. J. Maxwell, with descant). Dr. Lee has also a two-part 'Come, Sweet Delight', smooth and tasty, and Mr. Brook a broad, *sostenuto* 'Summer's Farewell'. Three-part: Brook's 'Carpenter' (a picture of Jesus thus; so it would go well in Sunday School). Cyril Christopher's 'Britann', singable either as a unison song or with the descant, celebrates the virtues of our fathers in lusty tunefulness. Norman Stone trimly sets for T.T.B.B. one of the ambling Dorset fa-la-la dialect songs (the brogue need not embarrass) of William Barnes, who suggested such engaging names to replace our laborious manufactured ones (e.g. 'folk-wain' for 'omnibus'). This is a genial little number. Another acceptable piece is J. Grocock's arrangement for males of 'Flowers in the Valley'. John Clements, of B.B.C. choral fame, has composed shapely, pleasingly rich music for the anonymous words 'I bequeath my turtle-dove'. (S.A.T.B.: all parts a little divided.) R. Groves has a good easy 'Lullaby' for the same sort of choir, and S. E. Lovatt, that skilled hand, is here again, with 'Why dost thou wound?'—gentle old-fashioned chromaticism, not overdone.

Francis, Day & Hunter.—Unison songs, easy and in plain, tuneful style, are W. H. Parry's 'Bed in Summer' and 'City Child'. Lloyd Webber's 'Moon Silver' is a useful barcarolle for S.S. Among easy arrangements are R. Graves's, of a French Noël, now entitled 'Can you hear the choirs of angels?' and Harry Dexter's, of 'Ye banks and braes'. Francis Chagrin's 'Cradle Song' (S.S.A.) is a gentle essay in sustentation (good top A's needed). F. H. Wood's four-movement cantata 'Motherland', for accompanied S.S.A., sets with keen knowledge of choral power and resource four of William Watson's inspiring poems. This, in the tradition of Parry and other fine British writers of our renaissance, will engage a good choir's utmost interest. Orchestral score and parts (strings and piano) are on hire. In this form, there is a short overture, in addition. The same composer's 'Whoso doeth these things' is an unaccompanied S.A.T.B. anthem, strong in swift declamatory strokes or meditative phrases, built up (with a little part-division) to a stirring climax. This is worth every choirmaster's attention. There is another good little anthem:



## Songs of praise the Angels sang

Anthem for Festival or General use

Words by JAMES MONTGOMERY

MUSIC BY

ERIC H. THIMAN

London: NOVELLO &amp; COMPANY, Limited

**SOPRANO**  
**ALTO**

**TENOR**  
**BASS**

**ORGAN**

*Moderato maestoso* *f*

*Moderato maestoso*  $\text{♩} = c. 132$  *f*

*Ped.*

an-gels sang, Heaven with al-le-lu-ias rang, When Je-ho-vah's

work be-gun, When He spake and it was done. *mf*

Songs of praise a- *mf*

SONGS OF PRAISE THE ANGELS SANG

*cresc.* *f*

Songs of praise a -

woke the morn When the Prince of Peace was born;

*cresc.* *f*

Cap-tive led

rose\_ when He\_ Cap - tive led\_ cap - ti - vi -

*p* SOPRANOS (AND ALTOS ad lib.)

ty. Heaven and earth must pass a - way,

*p* Man.

SONGS OF PRAISE THE ANGELS SANG

Songs of praise shall crown that day;

God will make new heavens, new earth,

And shall man a - lone be dumb.

Songs of praise shall hail their birth.

Man.

Till that glo - rious king - dom come?

Ped.



SONGS OF PRAISE THE ANGELS SANG

*f* *animato*  
*mf cresc.*

No! the Church de - lights to raise Psalms and hymns and

*f* *mf* *cresc.*

No! the Church de - lights to raise Psalms and hymns and songs of

*f* *mf* *animato*  
*cresc.*

No! the Church de - lights to raise Psalms and hymns and songs of praise, and

*f* *mf* *cresc.*

No! the Church de - lights to raise Psalms and hymns and songs of praise, and

*ff* *animato*  
*cresc.*

songs, and songs of praise, and songs of praise, and songs of

*ff*

praise, and songs of praise, and songs of praise, and songs of

*ff*

songs of praise, and songs of praise, and songs of

*ff*

songs of praise, and songs of praise, and songs of

Ped. Reed

SONGS OF PRAISE THE ANGELS SANG

*poco a poco più largamente*

praise.

*poco a poco più largamente*

praise.

*poco a poco più largamente*

*f*

*ff a tempo*

Saints be-low, with heart and voice, Still in songs of

*ff a tempo*

*poco meno f*

praise re-joice, Learn-ing here, by faith and love,

*poco meno f*

*poco meno f*

# SONGS OF PRAISE THE ANGELS SANG

*mf*

Songs of praise to sing a - bove. Borne up - on their

*mf*

*mf*

*poco a poco cresc.*

lat - est breath. Songs of praise shall con - quer death;

*poco a poco cresc.*

*poco a poco cresc.*

*f*

Then, a - midst e - ter - nal joy, Songs of praise their

*f*

Then, a - midst e - ter - nal joy, Songs of praise their

*f*

Then, a - midst e - ter - nal joy, Songs of praise their

*f*

Then, a - midst e - ter - nal joy, — Songs of praise their



## SONGS OF PRAISE THE ANGELS SANG

powers, \_\_\_\_\_ their powers \_\_\_\_\_ em - ploy, their  
 powers em - ploy, their powers em - ploy, their  
 powers em - ploy, their powers \_\_\_\_\_ em - ploy, their  
 powers em - ploy, their powers em - ploy, their

[illegible]

## RECENT ANTHEMS

Bach—Harris	... If Thou art near .. .. .	MT 1277	4d.
Blower, Maurice	... O Word of God .. .. .	MT 1278	4d.
Broadhead, G. F.	... Whoso dwelleth under the defence .. ..	MT 1271	4d.
Darke, Harold	... Lift up your heads .. .. .	Anth. 1272	1s. 6d.
Graves, Richard	... O sweet Jesu .. .. .	MT 1279	4d.
Handel—Atkins	... How beautiful are the feet .. ..	Anth. 1274	6d.
Harris, W. H.	... Strengthen ye the weak hands .. ..	Anth. 1275	9d.
Lang, C. S.	... O Lord support us all the day long .. ..	MT 1286	4d.
Poole-Connor, David	Thee we adore .. .. .	MT 1291	4d.
Rowley, Alec	... My Jesu, stay Thou by me .. ..	MT 1283	4d.
Shaw, Martin	... Service and Strength .. .. .	Anth. 1279	6d.
Thiman, Eric H.	... A Christmas Cradle Hymn .. ..	Anth. 1278	6d.
	An Evening Prayer .. .. .	MT 1272	4d.
	Crossing the bar .. .. .	MT 2184	4d.
	O glad some light .. .. .	MT 1269	4d.
Wadely, F. W.	... Christians, be joyful .. .. .	Anth. 1276	6d.
	O saving Victim .. .. .	MT 1288	4d.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SHORT ANTHEMS

Alcock, W. G.	... For Thou, Lord, art holy ..	Sh.Anth. 293	4d.	SATB unaccom., TB divide (Introit)
Chambers, H. A.	... God be in my head ..	P.C.B. 1255	2d.	
Bach, J. S. (adapt. Sampson)	Wherefore, O Saviour, so long ... in returning ..	Sh.Anth. 301	4d.	
Gibbons, O.	... In humble faith I dedicate to Thee .. ..	300	4d.	SSATB unaccom.
Hutchings, A.	... All ye that pass by ..	294	4d.	(Passion)
"	... Hosanna to the Son ..	295	4d.	
"	... God is gone up ..	296	4d.	(Ascension)
"	... O how glorious is the King- dom .. ..	297	4d.	(All Saints)
Moss, R. Britton	... A Prayer for Peace ..	299	4d.	SATB unaccom- panied
Pritchard, E. L. M.	... Teach me, O Lord ..	302	4d.	(Introit)
"	... Let my supplication ..	303	4d.	(Introit)
"	... O let Thy merciful kindness ..	304	6d.	unacc. (Introit)
"	... I have had as great delight ..	305	4d.	(Introit)
Rhodes, H.	... O loyal hearts ..	298	4d.	(Armistice)

# NOVELLO

Kenneth Finlay's unaccompanied 'Come down, O love Divine'; and a couple of sprightly arrangements for men alone: Linstead's, of 'Begone, dull Care' and Dexter's, of 'The Rakes of Mallow': jovial, welcome items.

**Edward Arnold.**—Unison: Thiman's 'Gratitude', for massed voices, would go well in church. Gerald Finzi's 'Muses and Graces' shows his always tasteful fancy. B. Brockless's 'Prayers' has a descendant: it too would be enjoyed in church or Sunday school: it is a grade more difficult than most of the others. Also for trebles with descendant is J. G. Maxwell's arrangement of 'The Wee Cooper o' Fife'. I think the Sassenach might, with care, be coached into passable Scots sounds by some real Scot—of whom surely, even in these decadent times, England could produce an odd specimen. The song is certainly a good tester and warmer for any class. In two treble parts we have Lovelock's 'Under the Greenwood Tree', with excellent rise and quiet impulse: this would develop colour and mood. Bullock's 'Minnie and Winnie' (s.s.) is in slow rocking 3-4, with a happy key-change that will be relished. His 'City Child' (also s.s.) touches the apt daintiness of Tennyson's idea. In three treble parts, accompanied, is Balfour Gardiner's 'Silver Birch', a tiny charmer needing delicate toning. Armstrong Gibbs is here again, with an s.s.a. setting of some words from Psalm 127, 'Except the Lord build'. Again we have the clever use of key-change which always gives a fillip to this composer's work. Lloyd Webber's 'A Piper' (s.s.a.) is a good light, rather conventionally-tuned piece. For four trebles, rare combination, there is Charles Wood's 'Golden Slumbers', easy and natural and quietly moving.

**Paxton.**—Everyone has enjoyed Francis Collinson's folk song interludes in the B.B.C.'s 'Country Magazine'. Some of his tasteful arrangements are to hand: 'The Blackbird' (s. solo and s.s.a. refrain), 'Don't 'ee go a-rushing' (two s. solo parts, or two tenors, with the choir as before); and 'The Prickety Bush', from Dorset, similarly set out. These are sweet buds from the wonderful ballad tree. 'Three Pictures in Sepia' by Desmond MacMahon are quite exciting music—settings of 'spirituals' by Vachel Lindsay ('Samson' and 'Daniel Jazz'), and Stephen Vincent Benét, a true poet, too early gone ('From a Slave Ship'). These, separately issued at 1s. or 8d., can be sung either as baritone solos (with piano or orchestra), or as solo with female chorus: or the solo part may be sung by a male choir in unison, with the women; or the work may be performed by mixed voices, men taking the solo part.

Orchestral parts, which would clearly much enhance the effects, are to be hired. There is a good deal of scope in these fancies, especially in the more grotesque moments, for pungent illustration. Where a flexible style has been cultivated, these settings should be tried.

**Boosey & Hawkes.**—A gentle old ballad of nostalgic feeling, 'Faithful Johnny', is arranged as a unison song. Gerald Finzi's setting of 'Let us now praise famous men' is for T.B. or S.A.: able declamation and some effective harmonies. Besides the piano part, strings (on hire) can be used. For T.T.B.B. Armstrong Gibbs has several pieces: 'The Listeners' (De La Mare), an ingenious, characteristic 'When icicles', and an 'O Mistress Mine' to rejoice the tenor lines (top A). He adds Shakespeare's 'Blow, blow', giving it a sting and chromatic ring that all male choirs will revel in. Of arrangements there is no end: 'The Kerry Dance' is a perpetual favourite: here is a S.A.T.B. one, by Alec Rowley, of Molloy's bit of sparkling Irishry (or what passes for such). Turning to enjoy serener airs: Gretchaninov's 'Litany of Supplication' is here, in an adaptation by Norman Johnson. It is from his 'Liturgica Domestica', op. 79. The eight-part choir, with a bass soloist, is needed for this noble plea, to which so very few of us can live up. Finally arises Stravinsky, with a severe 'Credo' (Latin only, unaccompanied) in simple free rhythm, which is on the plainest possible diatonic lines, with a good deal of bass tonic-pedal. The effect of this modalistic procedure is rather glum, but it probably reflects the spirit of an ancient Russian style.

H. Watkins Shaw has edited Blow's 'O Lord God,' an eight-part anthem (Full, then S.A.T.T.B. Verse, then Full; 1s. 3d. from St. Michael's College, Tenbury, Worcs). Here is ample force, that strong contrapuntal pull and foresight which sometimes leads to rather unexpected harmonic effects. Blow was an overshadowed man, and it is good to have some of the strongest of his work thus made available.

'Music in Britain' (Blandford Press, 10s. 6d.) is a handsome volume, edited by Dr. W. L. Reed, exhibiting eighteen pieces, from 'Sumer is icumen in' to 'Nimrod', and from Handel to Holst. The last few, by contemporaries, are mostly weaker. Having been down mines, I am glad one song is in praise of coal-miners. Another, however, becomes slightly maudlin. An ancient Elgarian idolater regrets that unhappy rest near the end of his arrangement of the National Anthem. The pictures in this book are choice: each piece has its appropriate scenic supplement.

W. R. A.

## Gramophone Notes: Some LP's

**I**LL-PLACED 'breaks' between sides of 78 r.p.m. records have long infuriated collectors, who might be pardoned for thinking that Long-Playing has now banished that annoyance. Not so, unfortunately, as witness the new American 'Rigoletto' (H.M.V. ALP 1004-6). The 'break' between the fifth and last sides comes, almost incredibly, in the middle of the famous quartet—at the change from minor to major key. From the amount of unused surface at the end of some of the sides, I am not convinced this was necessary. None the less this is, despite one sizeable cut and a few small ones, a well-recorded and very welcome issue, admirably conducted by Renato Cellini. Leonard Warren, of the Metropolitan, would have no difficulty in proving himself from this recording alone one of the very finest operatic baritones: his musical sensibility and his power of characterization are alike immense, and he maintains a full and finely controlled tone over an immense range. His big set-pieces are superb, and expectedly so; but listen also when Sparafucile has presented himself for the first time, and Rigoletto sends him away with 'Va, va, va, va'. In the changed tone

of these repetitions one can almost hear the horror dawning on Rigoletto that he will, in fact, shortly need to use the assassin's services. Mr. Warren, however, succumbs to the temptation to display his range in excess of Verdi's demands, and however effective this sounds—for instance the high B double-flat in his last bars—its propriety is doubtful. Jan Peerce, who brings a fine technique but a certain vulgarity of approach to the part of the Duke, also takes liberties. It is consequently surprising to find that Erna Berger—a charming and refined Gilda—actually ends 'Caro nome' as Verdi wrote it, with a shake on treble-space E instead of with an ascent to the higher octave. (She is quite capable of this upper reach, as she shows elsewhere in this recording.)

'Le Nozze di Figaro', on Col. 33 CX 1007-10, assembles as illustrious a cast as one is likely to encounter today, and the performance under Herbert von Karajan is on the whole first-class. Among some fine solos and ensembles one notes particularly the often-omitted 'Aprite un po' quegl'occhi', sung by the jealous Figaro in the last act, splendidly performed here by



Erich Kunz. The one point of thoroughly bad singing comes from George London as the Count, who at the melodic climax of 'Non più andrai' perpetrates a portamento (between his top E and the C below) which it is hardly credible that Karajan should have permitted in one verse after another. Irmgaard Seefried seems miscast as Susanna—too ladylike and not girlish enough for proper contrast with the Countess (Elisabeth Schwarzkopf). The main snag about this issue, however, is that the recitatives are omitted, so that this is a 'complete recording' only in a Pickwickian sense. The omission not only destroys dramatic continuity; it also makes for some abrupt and un-Mozartian transitions of key, and of course crowds the arias awkwardly together. Might it not have been better to give the recitatives, shortened if necessary?

Decca's issue of 'Pelléas et Mélisande' (LXT 2171-4) is a treasure. Ansermet conducts, Suzanne Danco and Pierre Mollet are the lovers, and the performances of Heinz Rehfuss as Golaud and André Vessières as Arkel are so good as to claim equal importance with the title-roles. The off-stage chorus in act I, scene 3 is not fully audible; that is the sole blemish I would note in an issue that seems to catch miraculously Debussy's translation (that seems the word) of spoken French into music.

### Orchestral

Toscanini's Eroica is famous: if only (so the thought came, on playing over H.M.V. ALP 1008) he had vouchsafed us some Beethoven at the Royal Festival Hall, to leaven the stodge of undiluted Brahms! This performance with the N.B.C. Orchestra is magnificent and, if one may venture on a much-abused word, authentic. Struck by some unusual accent or *sforzando*, one turns to the score—and there, sure enough, is the marking, but somehow no one else seems to have seen so clearly what it meant. I stick by 'authentic', indeed, despite Toscanini's addition of trumpets at a first-movement climax (bar 658 and following)—where Beethoven had started to give the trumpets the tune, and then broke them off because they could not in his day manage a dominant arpeggio after a tonic one. It is a pity, however, that in this recording the woodwind counterpoint finds itself drowned at this passage. Toscanini also deals with four Rossini overtures ('Barbiere', 'La Gazza Ladra', 'La Cenerentola' and the more rarely-heard and richly comic 'Il Signor Bruschino') on H.M.V. ALP 1007 in his usual masterly style, nearly always matched by the N.B.C. playing.

Schubert's symphony no. 2 comes out agreeably on Capitol CCL 7512 from the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra under William Steinberg. The recording of the wind is 'better than life': I doubt whether any non-microphone performance would give the prominence which the clarinet (in a weak part of its range) gets here—and seems to need—when it takes over the melody in bar 433 of the first movement.

### Concertos

There is a story of Richter rehearsing with a prima donna who hung on to a high note in 'Fidelio'. Richter swept the accompaniment on, leaving her stranded. On which the following dialogue ensued:

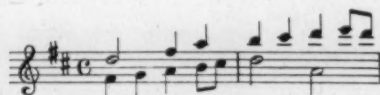
P.D.: 'Oh, Dr. Richter, I make a pause on that note.'

H.R. (ostentatiously consulting score): 'There is no pause.'

P.D.: 'No, I know there isn't one, but I *make* one on that note.'

H.R.: 'If Beethoven 'ave want pause, he would 'ave mark. He 'ave not mark, so we do not make.'

I am reminded of this whenever a violinist (the latest is Francescatti on Col. 33 CX 1011) introduces into Beethoven's concerto that cadenza-trick of Kreisler's:



Sometimes I feel that if Beethoven had wanted such contrapuntal ingenuity applied to his own themes, 'he would 'ave mark'. At other times it seems to me that such ingenuity, if not blatantly out of style, is exactly the kind of thing that justifies a cadenza. (Any views?) Otherwise this is a fine performance—with a good balance struck between athletic and lyrical styles, and with remarkably true and sweet intonation. There is an unfortunate and inexplicable wrong note in a *cantabile* passage towards the end of the slow movement, and the accompaniment by Ormandy and the Philadelphia is rather heavy at times.

Zara Nelsova is for the most part admirably sympathetic, but at other points strangely imperceptive, in Dvořák's cello concerto (Decca LXT 2727). Her technique is considerable, but fails her in an out-of-tune descending run of great difficulty at the end of the first movement. Krips and the L.S.O. give a somewhat stiff accompaniment.

Those who welcomed Sackville-West and Shawe-Taylor's 'The Record Guide' (1951)—and what collector did not?—will wish to make the acquaintance of its supplement, 'The Record Year' (Collins, 18s.) by the same authors, assisted by Andrew Porter. It covers issues from January 1951 to May/June 1952, and gives a complete guide to LP's available in Britain. It again combines musical connoisseurship, technical expertise, and a most readable style. Connoisseurs of connoisseurship will note the adjective 'spick' (without 'span').

'AJAX.'

## ANTHEM COMPETITION RESULT

Dr. William H. Harris and Dr. Eric Thiman, the judges in the Anthem Competition sponsored by Messrs. Novello & Co. and announced in the *Musical Times* in June 1952, have made the following awards and comments:

First prize: JOHN JOUBERT, 'O Lorde, the maker of al thing'. (A fine piece, dignified and ecclesiastical in style.)

Second prize: JOHN GRAVES, 'My soul, there is a country'. (A charming and effective piece, well suited for averagely-good choir and organ.)

### Specially commended:

Alwyn Surplice, 'Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle?';  
Harold Hall, 'Fight the good fight';  
John Graves, 'God, that madest heaven and earth'.

The two prize-winning anthems will be published as supplements to the January and February *Musical Times*. Dr. Harris's report is as follows:

When Dr. Thiman and I settled down to the task of examining the 235 manuscripts entered for this competition we hardly dared hope that we might be so

fortunate as to discover another 'Wilderness'. We remembered that when that famous anthem was submitted for competition by S. S. Wesley it failed to obtain a prize. Should we be able to recognize such quality, and point unhesitatingly to the winner? There were certain conditions to be observed:

1. Anthems should be for general and seasonal use, rather than for special occasions, and should be of more extended form than the short introit.

2. They should be for not more than four voices (S.A.T.B.) with the minimum of division, and should preferably have organ accompaniment. But unaccompanied anthems are not excluded.

3. Passages for solo voices should be of moderate difficulty, and the accompaniment should not demand greater resources than that of the average parish-church organ.

Many were ruled out through failing to comply with these conditions, and were too long, too short, too elaborate, or too simple. Some of the best written and most practical as regards performance seemed to have little to say, and were frequently commonplace, with weak and over-luscious harmonies. There was often a strange insensitiveness to the beauty of words and a

good deal of tiresome and unnecessary repetition. In some of the more modern examples, composers seemed unable to maintain a consistency of style, and modulated too freely and unconvincingly. Indeed a lack of style, shape, and beauty of line disfigured much of the work, and we were soon conscious of the difficulty of writing effective works of this kind with the limited resources of voices and organ. Indeed, when it is remembered that some of our most gifted and technically accomplished composers are not always successful in dealing with this form of composition, it is hardly surprising that we came across some very odd and immature work.

What seems urgently needed is music which will not only meet liturgical requirements, but will show some sympathetic understanding of the purpose and ideals of church music—English music which will seem not altogether incongruous or out of place in our English cathedrals and parish churches; and above all, a compelling urge to write it. We have tried to select the best that offered itself, and I may say that we had no hesitation in deciding (quite independently) on the prize awards. We have also been happy to recommend certain other anthems for publication.

## Church and Organ Music

### ROYAL COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS

#### The Distribution of Diplomas

The Distribution of Diplomas will take place on Saturday 24 January, at 3 p.m. The President will give an address, and Dr. J. Dykes Bower, organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, will play some of the pieces selected for the July 1953 examinations. There will be an informal conversazione after the recital, to which members and friends are invited.

*Admission will be by ticket only, to be obtained by postal application to the College. No tickets will be despatched before 19 January.*

#### Choir-training Examinations, May 1953

The Syllabus may be obtained on application to the College.

#### Christmas Vacation

The College will be closed from Wednesday, 24 December until Saturday, 27 December (both days inclusive).

#### Organ Practice (Members only)

From 26 January until the end of March, the charge will be 2s. per hour, payable at the time of booking.

J. A. SOWERBUTTS (*Hon. Secretary*).

## MISCELLANEOUS

The annual general meeting of the Free Church Choir Union was held recently when the General Secretary, Mr. W. Glenn Ostler, presented a good report. The popularity of the Annual Festival Book has been one of the Union's successes and the co-operation of Novellos was warmly acknowledged. The book has been used as the basis of festivals and for local choir services throughout the country. Applications for the 1953 book (2s. 9d.) should be sent to the Secretary, 192 Downhills Park Road, N.17. Mr. Herbert Crellin, Chairman of the Committee for eighteen years, has retired from that office. Dr. Reginald Jacques will conduct the 1953 Festival with the Jacques Orchestra and with Dr. Eric H. Thiman at the organ.

The dedication of the organ in Hale Congregational Church, Cheshire (rebuilt by Jardine of Manchester) took place on 15 October. A recital of organ and choral music was given by Francis Jackson and a section of the Sale and District Musical Society (Alfred Higson) combined with the church choir (George Budden). The programme included motets, by Byrd, Victoria, Palestrina, and Rubbra, and organ pieces by Bairstow, Bach, Franck and Guilman.

A series of three recitals was given by Mr. Clifford Roberts at St. John's Church, Hove, during October.

Recitals on the new three-manual organ by Hill and Norman & Beard, at Christ Church, Crouch End, will continue as follows: by Mr. W. H. Gabb (11 December), Mr. Geraint Jones (8 January), Mr. Charles Proctor (22 January), Mr. E. Garth Benson (5 February), all at 8.15. Programmes (2s. 6d.) from the organist, Mr. T. A. W. Haydon, 51 Sandringham Gardens, N.12, or at the church doors.

The Christchurch (New Zealand) Diocesan Choral Association held its annual festival on 25 September. Fifteen parish choirs took part in services in Christchurch Cathedral. The anthems were Tye's 'O come, ye servants', Thiman's 'O gladsome light', Ford's 'Almighty God, Who hast me brought' and Graves's 'O sweet Jesu'. Mr. W. P. J. Bornet was at the organ and Mr. E. R. Field-Dodgson conducted.

An anthem and organ recital was given at Hurstpierpoint Parish Church, Sussex, by Mr. George Dawes and the church choir on 22 October.

Howells's 'Hymnus Paradisi', Stanford's Stabat Mater, and Fauré's Requiem were given in Southwark Cathedral under Dr. E. T. Cook on 8 November.

The church choir (Dr. Geoffrey Leeds) gave a recital at St. James's Church, Sussex Gardens, W.2, on 26 October. Canticles at Evensong were sung to Sumson in G, and the anthems included William Mundy's 'O Lorde, the maker of al thing', and Weelkes's 'Let Thy merciful ears' and 'Hosanna to the Son of David'.

Choirs of Burnley Parish Church and St. John's, Burnley, with Dr. William Hardwick, gave an organ and choral recital at Burnley Parish Church on 11 October. The programme included motets and anthems by Weelkes, Gibbons, William McKie, Charles Wood and W. H. Harris.

The Jan Sedivka Chamber Orchestra is giving a series of concerts at St. Martin-in-the-Fields on Tuesdays at 1.5-1.55. The programme for 11 November consists of Boyce's Suite for strings, Bach's violin concerto in A minor, Bettinelli's Two Inventions (first performance) and Ireland's Concertino pastorale.

The London Bach Society (Dr. Paul Steinitz) gave a recital at the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Great Missenden, on 24 October. The programme included motets by Byrd, Holst's 'This have I done' and excerpts from Schubert's Mass in G. Mr. John Raiton was at the organ.

The Choir Festival of the Rural Deanery of Wigan was held in Wigan Parish Church on 3 November. Eleven choirs took part and were conducted by Mr. George Galloway with Mr. Brian W. Trueman at the organ. Canticles were sung to Wilson in C and the anthems included Charles Macpherson's 'Thou, O God, art praised in Zion'.

A recital in aid of the organ restoration fund was given at Holy Trinity, Chelsea, on 14 October by Dorothy Bond (soprano) and Alan Harverson (organ). The programme included organ works by Bach, Franck, Langlais, Dupré, and Murrill, and songs by Grolez, Flor Peeters and Chausson.

The St. Paul's Festival Choir (Richard Latham) gave a recital on 16 October at St. Paul's, Wilton Place, S.W.1. The programme included Bach's 'O Light everlasting' and Stanford's Stabat Mater. Mr. Ralph Nicholson led the orchestra and Mr. John Birch was at the organ.

Mr. Walter Spinney (organ) with Miss Gloria Spinney (mezzo-contralto) gave a 'request' programme in Northiam Parish Church, Sussex, on 1 November. Items included were Mendelssohn's sonata no. 2 and 'Paeon' by T. H. Spinney.

Westminster Choral Society will sing 'The Messiah' at 7.0 on 6 December at Westminster Central Hall. Dr. G. Thalben-Ball will be the organist and Mr. Allan Brown will conduct. The Society will sing carols at the same hall on 20 December at 7.0.

A recital was given in St. Mary's Church, Harrow, on 11 October by Gertrude Collins (violin) and John Dussek (organ). The programme included Bach's Partita in E minor and Vaughan Williams's 'The Lark Ascending'.

An organ and piano recital was given at Dudley Parish Church on 1 October by Mrs. Doreen Cutler and Mr. A. H. Cutler. The programme included works by Bach, Schumann and Widor.

A Vaughan Williams birthday concert was given in the church of St. Columba-by-the-Castle, Edinburgh, on 12 October. The programme was arranged by the organist of the church, Ronald Johnson.

At the sixth Festival of Kent Choirs on 11 October, 'Judas Maccabaeus' was sung in Rochester Cathedral under Mr. H. A. Bennett. Mr. James Levett was at the organ and Mrs. Zoë Bennett at the piano.

Dr. Francis Sutton has recently completed another series of weekly midday organ recitals at Holy Trinity Church, Kingsway, in aid of the organ and church restoration fund.

The Chelmsford Singers and the Essex Symphony Orchestra under Stanley Vann gave a performance of Vaughan Williams's 'A Sea Symphony' and 'Toward the unknown region' in Chelmsford Cathedral on 4 November.

A music festival was held at St. Andrew's Church, Handsworth, near Birmingham on 12-19 October. The St. Andrew's Choir and the Kingsdown Orchestra took part. Mr. A. R. Tunnicliffe conducted 'Saul', 'The Messiah', and an orchestral concert.

Mr. George Malcolm addressed the Catholic Musicians' Guild on 15 October, on 'Music and the Liturgy'.

The Barnstaple Free Church Choral Union gave a performance of Mendelssohn's 'Elijah' on 29 October. Mr. Alwyn J. Rogers conducted.

The Kingsway Choral Society (Donald Cashmore) will sing carols on 18 December at 7.0 in Kingsway Hall, W.C.2. Soloists will be Dennis Noble (baritone) and Margaret Cobb (organ).

The Free Church Choirs of High Wycombe and District held a festival concert at Wesley Church, High Wycombe, on 18 October. Kenneth Fox was the conductor.

High Wycombe Oratorio Choir will sing Part I and selections from Part II of Mendelssohn's 'St. Paul' on 2 December at 8.0. Frederick Bailey will conduct.

The South-West London Choral Society (Frank Odell) sang Verdi's 'Requiem' and Parry's 'Blest pair' at Tooting Central Hall at their first concert of the season on 29 October.

#### Appointments

Mr. Keith E. Jewell, St. George's Cathedral, Capetown.

Mr. Francis Cameron, St. Anne's, Highgate.

Mr. Reginald Moore, Exeter Cathedral.

Mr. John Brough, Director of Music, St. Edmund's School, Canterbury.

#### Choral Works by Josquin des Prés

Two welcome reprints come from Mössler Verlag (Novello) and would make first-rate programme material for more ambitious choral societies. 'Drei Psalmen' contains two Latin psalm-settings for S.A.T.B. and one for four male voices. This volume is edited by Friedrich Blume, who is also responsible for the excellent text of the 'Missa de Beata Virgine' for four- and five-part choir.

D. S.

Eric Fogg's 'Jesukin' and 'The Carol of the Little King', from his song-cycle 'The Little Folk', are now available for S.A. in a combined copy (Bosworth), and make suitable Christmas carols.



## SELECTED RECITALS

Mr. Roy Collison, Lord Mayor's Chapel, Bristol—Fantasia and Fugue in C minor, *Bach*; Scherzo in G minor, *Bossi*; Suite in D minor, *Stanley*; 'Nun danket', *Karg-Elert*.

Mr. Alwyn Surplice, Sidmouth Parish Church—Prelude and Fugue in C minor, *Bach*; Sonata in E flat minor, *Rheinberger*; Elegy, *Parry*; Pastorale (Sonata no. 1), *Guilmant*; First movement, Symphony no. 5, *Widor*.

Mr. Dennis Townhill, St. Matthew's Church, Skegness—Prelude and Fugue in C, *Bach*; Three hymn-tune preludes, *Whitlock*; Rhapsody in D flat, *Howells*; Fantasy, *W. H. Harris*.

Mr. A. B. Garrard, St. Magnus-the-Martyr, London Bridge—Prelude (Sonata no. 7), *Rheinberger*; Song of Sunshine, *Hollins*; Prelude and Fugue in F minor, *Bach*; Allegro (Sonata no. 5), *Stanford*.

Mr. Frederick Geoghegan, St. Michael's Church, Chester Square, S.W.—Passacaglia, *Bach*; Fantasia, *Reger*; 'La Nativité', *Langlais*; Final in C minor, *Dupré*.

Mr. Denis Vaughan, Holy Trinity Church, Chelsea—Voluntary in G minor, *Stanley*; Symphonie-Passion, *Dupré*.

Mr. F. C. J. Swanton, Mariners' Church, Dun Laoghaire—Fugue in B minor, *Bach*; Choral in B minor, *Frank*; Andante cantabile and Scherzo (Symphony no. 4), *Widor*; a *Stanford* programme.

Mr. James Mactaggart, St. Margaret's Church, Newlands—Allegro, *Stanley*; Sinfonia (Cantata 156), Fugue in G minor (the 'Great'), *Bach*; Allegro in F sharp minor, *Guilmant*; Irish Phantasy, *Wolstenholme*.

Mr. M. Bryan Hesford, St. Margaret's Church, Altrincham—Three chorale preludes, Prelude and Fugue in E minor, *Bach*; Improvisation in the style of a toccata.

Holy Trinity Church, Llandudno: Miss Kathleen Arthur—Fantasia and Fugue on BACH, *Liszt*; Prelude, *Pienné*. Dr. Leslie D. Paul—Prelude and Fugue in A minor, *Bach*; Introduction and Allegro, *Walond*; March on a theme of Handel, *Guilmant*. Mr. E. Walter Jones (two programmes)—Symphony no. 5, *Widor*; Choral in A minor, *Frank*; Toccata-Prelude, *Bairstow*; Sonata no. 3, *Mendelssohn*. Mr. Allan Fairlie—Introduction, *Alcock*; Spring Song, *Hollins*.

Mr. E. H. Warrell, Charlton Parish Church—Prelude and Fugue in C minor, *Bach*; Sonata in D minor, *Mendelssohn*; Pastorale, *Arnold Richardson*; First movement, Sonata in F minor, *Rheinberger*.

Mr. James Lockhart, Church of St. John the Divine, Kennington—Introduction and Allegro, *Stanley*; Largo, Allegro, Aria and variations, *Festing*; Chorale preludes, *Bach*, *Brahms*; Prelude and Fugue in B minor, *Bach*.

Mr. Martin Hawkins, St. Peter-upon-Cornhill, E.C.—'Pax vobiscum', *Karg-Elert*; Concerto movement, *Dupuis*; Duetto, *W. Russell*; Marche Gothique, *Salomé*.

Mr. John Hill, St. Hildeburgh's Church, Hoylake—First movement, Sonata in F minor, *Rheinberger*; Prelude and Fugue in C minor, *Mendelssohn*; Cantilene, *Wolstenholme*; Elegy, *Thalben-Ball*; March on a theme of Handel, *Guilmant*.

## Letters to the Editor

## Handel and the Clarinet

May I offer a comment or two on Mr. Dart's letter in the November issue, since I have been concerned in several performances of the Overture in question, in which attempts were made to approximate as closely as possible to the instruments known to Handel.

Mr. Dart is quite correct in saying that the clarinets for which this work was written were, in modern terms, 'D' instruments. Internal evidence, both of the tessitura of the parts and of the fingerings of early clarinets, shows this to be the case. This does not mean, of course, that these instruments necessarily played from transposed parts; rather it confirms what is generally assumed, that it was the 'little trumpet' aspect of the clarinet which first brought it to notice, and that in pitch and size the earliest instruments gravitated towards the characteristic tonality and fourth-octave scale of the trumpet as a consequence. (Transposing clarinets belong to the second half of the eighteenth century, when more serious attempts were being made to assimilate this somewhat intractable instrument into organized music, the difficulty always having been the extremely limited range of tonalities possible on the early instrument.)

Mr. Haas's edition is in C (concert), and that of course accounts for the confusion over nomenclature to which Mr. Dart calls attention. This tonality obviously suits modern B-flat clarinets better than if they were called upon to scream away in (written) E major in their uppermost register. It is not, however, quite so satisfactory for the horn, on which fanfare-patterns in C-basso sound far too ponderous. The problem is neatly avoided in Mr. Coopersmith's edition, where the clarinet parts are in two sharps, as in the original (and indeed in Mr. Haas's edition) but the transposed horn part contains a direction for it to be read in either F or E flat according to whether C or B-flat clarinets are being used. It remains only to say that (unlike the

instrument of Handel's day) a modern clarinet in C can play in D, for the general reader to lose all track of the argument!

Finally, I do not think there are two American editions. At least, my own copy of Mr. Coopersmith's was sent me by Mr. Marx!

ERIC HALFPENNY

Hon. Secretary, The Galpin Society.

## Slurs in Bach

I wish to thank those who responded to my query in the August issue concerning Tovey's warning against slurring the subject of the G sharp minor fugue ('48', Bk. 1, no. 18) 'iambically across the beats'. My letter avoided suggesting that I resisted Tovey's counsel. I have eschewed the slurs since the publication of the Associated Board Edition, but I wonder how many readers were, like me, wise after the event of reading Tovey. What I still seek is historical evidence that shall prevent any temptation to slur. Had the correct reading and not the temptation been naturally suggested by our normal musical training Tovey would have had no need to enforce it. Like smaller men, he waxes pontifical where he fails to explain, however valid the precept.

Not so Miss Dorothy Swainson, who makes the interesting observation that when Anna Magdalena copied Couperin's 'Les Bergeries' into her Notebook she omitted the slurs in the third couplet; Miss Swainson also quotes a passage beginning at bar 179 of the Triple Harpsichord Concerto in C to support her belief that when Bach wanted slurs across the beat he wrote them.

From New York, Miss Geraldine de Courcy passes on the opinion on the point given by Dr. Ludwig Misch. He deplores 'the artificial mode of thought frequently engendered by Riemann's "Theory of Phrasing" with its exaggerated up-beat views', seen in

his Analysis of the '48'. It is good to have the aesthetic reactions of so distinguished a musicologist as Dr. Misch, but he supports his views only on aesthetic grounds. Few of us need conversion to those views, for Harold Samuel and other fine Bach players checked our Riemannism before Tovey's pronouncement was printed.

Mr. Harold Dexter suggests that Tovey objects not to slurring, but to slurring iambically—in other words to the heavy accentuation of the second note of each slur. He also refers us to Schweitzer's teaching concerning anacrusis; surely it is only a sense of anacrusis that makes a player slur across beats, and I take it that in condemning the slurs Tovey denies anacrusis.

Hence the basis of arguments used by Mr. G. B. Crossley, Mr. Frank C. Cotgreave and Mr. Kenneth N. S. Counter. The first note of that subject is certainly not anacrusis. But is this a subject with a head and tail? Yes; because the tail is used for episode germination. Does that mean that the subject should be articulated when announced, or should it be played without any marked division of phrases? If it is to be divided, then the first phrase ends on D sharp (the highest note), for the tail used in episodes begins on the following F sharp, and it is this note which many would have treated anacrusically had they not read Tovey or heard Samuel and other fine Bach players.

The same correspondents quote Tovey's prefatory remarks to the whole volume. When in doubt concerning interpretation of a Bach theme we are asked to sing it; but singing this subject merely leads us into the temptation we are told to conquer. I am not helped by mention of harpsichord and clavichord; neither removes the temptation. But when Tovey asks us to consider harmony as a guide to interpretation we may imagine that some help is forthcoming. Given that subject, most students would introduce a suspension on the first strong beat of the tail figure. Though this figure occurs some twenty times in middle entries and episodes, only once does Bach let it take a suspension.

I remember being told not to slur the third and fourth notes of the G major organ fugue on the grounds that my teacher's teacher had forbidden it. Mr. H. W. Stubbington writes of the same experience. Being a docile pupil, I stopped slurring and still *think* I dislike the slurs. I hoped that my query would raise no dispute *de gustibus*. On Tovey's rightness most of us agree, but I should still welcome evidence not based on aesthetic reactions.

ARTHUR HUTCHINGS.

## A Reform in Notation

I should like to voice a protest against the unnecessary difficulties created for singers by the apparently universal convention that forbids the joining of the tails of notes unless they are sung to the same syllable. Any choir could be excused for stumbling over such a bar as



Yet by joining the tails according to the beats the passage becomes simplicity itself:



There are already two indications of the relation of the words to the notes: firstly their position and secondly the slur marks. To introduce a third indication by means of the tails is wholly superfluous and prohibits the helpful grouping of notes to show the beats. May I ask publishers to abandon this useless and cumbrous convention?

ERIC MASEL.

## Organists in Opera

W. R. Anderson's letter on the above subject does not mention Dvořák's opera 'The Jacobin', which contains a lovable portrait of a village schoolmaster organist called Benda. The model of this portrait was Antonin Liehmann, who taught the young Dvořák the organ, piano and viola at Zlonice. This delightful opera was performed, in English, a few years ago by the Workers' Musical Association.

ALEC ROBERTSON.

## A Berlioz Society

May I draw your readers' attention to the recent formation of a Berlioz Society? This has been inaugurated primarily for the purpose of extending the appreciation and interest in the music of Hector Berlioz, but other neglected composers associated with him, such as Gluck, Spontini, and Weber, will also come within its scope. If any readers are interested, they should write to the undersigned, who will be glad to send them further details.

STEPHEN A. DREYFUSS.

3 Foscoate Road,  
London, N.W.4.

## The Amateurs' Exchange

*Under this heading we insert, free of charge, announcements by amateur musicians who wish to co-operate with others, especially in the private performance of chamber music.*

Bass clarinetist wishes to join an orchestra in London rehearsing works scored for his instrument.—B. E. R., c/o *Musical Times*.

Two orchestras in N.W. Middlesex have vacancies for instrumentalists: Mondays at 7.45, at Porter Street School, Northwood Hills—strings, oboe, bassoons, horns. Thursdays at 7.45, at Longfield School, Rayners Lane—violins, cellos, double-bass and timpani (instruments provided), horns, trumpet, trombones, flutes, oboe, bassoon.—Conductor, REGINALD MULLETT, 40 Ferndown, Northwood, or to the schools.

Second violin and viola wanted for string quartet, meeting fortnightly 6.30 to 9.0, for the practice of chamber music. Large library; N.W. London.—H. L., c/o *Musical Times*.

Gentleman accompanist wishes to meet singer for practice.—YOUNG, BATTERSEA 7522.

Student wishes to exchange aural training.—Miss PETTY, KEN 2312.

Pianist and clarinetist (middle-aged) wish to meet violinist and cellist to form trio or quartet, light and classical music. Streatham or West-End.—V. V., c/o *Musical Times*.

Singing student (young man) wishes to meet accompanist for practice and musical appreciation.—WAN 0010.

Vacancies for string and wind players in the St. Stephen's Orchestral Society. Rehearsals, Haverstock Hill Schools, Thursdays, 7.30 to 9.30. Extensive library.—SECRETARY, 64 South Hill Park, N.W.3 (HAM 0206).

Double-bass, professional player retired, would help amateur orchestra in classical and modern works, if suitable instrument provided.—A. DEMOLIN, Christ's Hospital, Horsham, Sussex (Southwater 203).

Pianist, own piano, Victoria district, wishes to meet violinist, cellist or other instrumentalist for ensemble work; also possibly another pianist for duets.—MACD., c/o *Musical Times*.

Mr. A. KENNEDY, 37 Wiltshire Road, S.W.9, being interested in a 'New English Bagpipes' wishes to meet others interested in playing instruments for folk music.

Composer wishes to meet string quartet. N. London for preference.—PETER CRUMP, 84 Wood Vale, N.10 (TUD 3684).

Brockley Concert Orchestra requires players for all instruments—brass, reeds, strings, bass (instrument provided).—Dr. W. R. MITCHELL, 23 St. Margaret's Road, Brockley, S.E.4 (Tideway 4573).

Young pianist wishes to meet young instrumentalists for practice in the London area.—P. S. S., c/o *Musical Times*.

Viola player (experienced) offers services to string quartet or other small combination. London, W. or S.—F. T. W., c/o *Musical Times*.

Average pianist seeks devotees of modern music.—A. BULA, 61 Shirley Road, Croydon, Surrey.

Advanced pianist (22) wishes to meet other instrumentalists for chamber music. Ealing district preferred.—V. C., *Musical Times*.

## 'A Masked Ball' at Covent Garden

'Un Ballo in Maschera'—or 'Ballo', as it has conveniently been known until now—has had a rough passage in its ninety-three years of life. Two years younger than the original version of 'Simone Boccanegra', and three years younger than 'La Forza del Destino', it aroused excitement initially on account of the censorable content of the story. Later generations have either idolized it for the chances it offered to fine singers, or dismissed it as dramatic nonsense with music that was said not to have grown up from the childish vulgarity of 'Il Trovatore' to the maturity of the last two operas. As recently as 1949, when 'Ballo' was given at Edinburgh, admirers of Verdi could be found scratching their heads over the dubious merits of plot and musical characterization.

The whole trouble was that Verdi and Somma, his librettist, were not allowed to write the opera they wanted. The assassination of Gustavus III, King of Sweden, was history, and inflammable history at that. Was not the implied moral of the incident, 'If you murder your ruler, he is quite likely to forgive you before he dies'? Scribe, who wrote the libretto for Auber's 'Gustave III', had not been prevented from retailing the gruesome tale in dramatic form, and not even the real Mme. Anckarstroem could prevent him from involving her in an illicit (and fictitious) love-affair with the king. But for Italy under Austrian and Papal rule such a subject was only tolerable when presented in the bewildering and unlikely version, set in Boston, Mass., ultimately adopted by Somma. Since 1859 the locale of the opera has been shifted from one part of the globe to another, but only Denmark in 1935 thought to restore the original time, place, and persons in the story. Prof. Dent's new English translation, which is being used at Covent Garden (first performance 23 October), likewise returns to Sweden and history; he also goes back to Scribe wherever an advantage may be found over Somma. The many inversions in the new text, the 'twases' and 'twills', must be assumed as conscious attempts to re-create Somma's idiom (though happily Dent does not attempt to rival his stilted vocabulary). I suggest that this style does not sound too forced in aria or chorus (for example, 'That soon him to the grave will bring'), but that in light conversation such artificialities, difficult enough to avoid in all conscience, sound ugly ('May I for the masquerade send out invitations?'; 'Tis another'; 'Herself shall decide who shall kill her seducer'). The translation certainly helps, however, to make the action clear, and contains some choice Dent. I think particularly of two passages for Counts Ribbing and Horn (Samuele and Tommo) whom Dent has striven to present as light- (however black-) hearted young noblemen. First the quartet, with chorus in act 2, which emerges brilliantly as—

Meet me by moonlight! Oh, how romantic!

The gallant husband his wife defending!

And what a strange place to choose for courting,

Under the gallows to lay them down!

'Twill be a wonderful tale to scatter

And make the chatter of all the town!

I lost on the opening night the admirable line 'All's well that ends well! Measure for measure' ('ve la tragedia muto in commedia') in the same number. I suspect that the English version may have made it difficult for the principals to delineate long vocal phrases. Oscar, the conspirators, and the sailor are best served, for they are gay or comic rôles, and Dent's operatic English is happiest when it chuckles.

I do not want to be unfair to Dent. The casting of the principal rôles had something also to do with the lack of Italianate vocal art. Edgar Evans, who sang King Gustavus, can portray the playboy and the lover; he looks well and moves easily; but his voice has a tight, dry quality that militates against generous, long-drawn tone. His enunciation is excellent. Jess Walters seems not to have shown himself happy when singing in English. His best English work with the company was in the title-rôle of 'Wozzeck' which no one could claim as demanding full-throated ease; his best Italianate work was in 'Il Trovatore' during the summer, when the opera was sung in Italian, and when he had two celebrities to compete with. Somma's Renato is a dull dog; Dent's Anckarstroem is a credible person, and Walters maintains that credibility, but did not bring Verdi's creation to life partly because the vocal tessitura is too high for him, partly because his voice is characterized by weight, not by forward resonance. There is little point in retailing Helene Werth's lack of success with Amelia. From time to time she achieved acceptable short phrases; for the most part the rôle, the language and an illness fought against her presumable desire to make a successful debut in London. The most enjoyable performance came from Adèle Leigh as Oscar. Yet her charming, reliable voice had not the incisive attack for all the music: so that 'Volta la terrea' largely came off because the required *slancio* happens where Miss Leigh can provide it, at the top of the voice, but 'Saper vorreste' sounded only amicable—as though Zerlina were wheedling Masetto, not as though a lively, affected courtier were mocking a rather humourless nobleman. But the top line of 'E scherzo' (in the fortune-telling scene) and the ebullience of the quintet 'Di che fulgor' (in the library) suited her splendidly: she looked delightful and acted with spirit. Urica, now known as Mlle. Arvidson, is no longer a Red Indian witch, but a slightly demented charlatan. Jean Watson trains her rich, large voice on this small but vivid rôle; her impressive performance was marred on this first night by a shortness of breath that made her break certain phrases in the middle—one hoped that nervousness alone was the cause. Frederick Dalberg and Michael Langdon made a capital pair of villainous dogs with splendid inky voices.

How does 'Ballo' succeed, after Dent's treatment? Admirably, I think. With the aid of the English version Günther Rennert, the producer, makes the action and the psychological motivation as clear and plausible as that of, say, 'La Traviata'—rather more plausible indeed, for in an age that does not understand the dictates of convention, Anckarstroem's change of heart can more easily be swallowed than Papa Ger-



mont's behaviour. And when the drama can be believed in, and so inhabited by the imagination, we can begin to listen to Verdi's score as music-drama, not just as music. The score of 'Ballo' teems with lovely music; it shows an amazing advance not only on 'La Traviata' but also, presumably, on the first version of 'Simone Boccanegra', for 'Ballo' stands up well to the revised version which we have come to know in recent years. The big set arias need no bush. But the ensembles, especially 'E scherzo', the trio 'Odi tu' and, following it, the quartet at the end of the gallows scene, the oath trio and quintet in the library, and the long finale are all numbers of lasting fascination, musical genius and, above all, dramatic fitness. 'E scherzo', with its jaunty tune that moves into a polyphonic web surmounted by Oscar's slow cantilena, is a descendant of the 'Rigoletto' quartet, just as 'Odi tu' is an ancestor of certain numbers in Sullivan's Savoy operas. And the love duet seems to me the finest, most moving expression of passion that Verdi created before the one which ends the first act of 'Otello'.

John Pritchard made his debut at Covent Garden as conductor of this new production, and at once showed compelling gifts as an interpreter of Verdi, by his pointing of every telling phrase, by his exposition of the sweep of each act, and by the expert playing which he elicited from the orchestra. The stage settings by Alan Barlow are not completely successful for they do not convincingly frame the action, though each set evokes an atmosphere—spaciousness in the ballroom, oppres-

siveness in the library (with a vast gloomy statue instead of the portrait mentioned in the score), and so on; the design for the first scene of all suggests Spain or Italy rather than Sweden. The total presentation suffices however, to show what a wonderful piece this opera is; and that is more important than anything. Now all we want is a set of principals who can really sing the music.

W. S. M.

Helene Werth, owing to a throat ailment, was unable to take part on 25 October. She was replaced by Constantina Araujo, a Brazilian soprano from Italy, who flew in with only minutes to spare and sang the rôle in Italian. On 4 November Elfriede Wasserthal took over, as previously arranged, and the part of Amelia was transformed from the first night almost beyond recognition. Mme. Wasserthal sang with full, impassioned voice (albeit in heavily accented English) and acted with conviction. Otakar Kraus, the new Anckarstroem, sang with his usual intelligence, but developed a wobble which badly marred the latter half of the opera—'Eri tu' in particular.

A. J.

[The new production of Bellini's 'Norma', in Italian, was given at Covent Garden on 8 November. A full notice of this, and also of the new production of Saint-Saëns's 'Samson and Delilah' at Sadler's Wells on 20 November, will appear in our next issue.

## London Concerts

### Guido Cantelli

Guido Cantelli made his first appearance in this country conducting the Scala Orchestra during the visit of the Scala opera company in 1950. At Covent Garden he conducted Beethoven's seventh, and in the Albert Hall Tchaikovsky's fifth symphonies. Neither of these concerts gave any hint of the profound, serious musicianship he was later to show. The playing at that time was brilliant, but in the readings each passage was driven for maximum 'effect'. The more surprising, then, were the consummate performances which Cantelli gave a year later, with the Philharmonia Orchestra, in the Royal Festival Hall. There were three programmes, two of them repeated: the choice of works was unconventional, the planning unorthodox. All five concerts were sensationally successful. One had never heard, need never hope to hear, better performances of Brahms's third, Mendelssohn's 'Italian', and Hindemith's 'Mathis der Maler' Symphonies. Busoni's 'Berceuse Elégiaque', Ravel's 'La Valse', were exquisite. This year Cantelli returned in triumph, and across October conducted six concerts, again in the Royal Festival Hall with the Philharmonia. He offered three pairs of near-identical programmes, containing a larger proportion of standard works than before, but also Wagner's 'A Faust Overture' and Cherubini's Symphony. It was again apparent that he is among the world's finest conductors, one of those most worth hearing. Yet only once in this series did he give a performance so memorable that it seemed unsurpassable. This was of Mussorgsky's 'Pictures at an Exhibition' on 23 October. Other performances, Kubelik's fine one, for instance, recently recorded by H.M.V., had left one wondering why Ravel bothered to orchestrate (at Koussevitsky's commission) these not very interesting piano pieces. Under Cantelli, however, they sounded enthralling.

In his understanding of orchestral capabilities Cantelli has probably no rival. His interpretations seem to spring in the first place from this instrumental sympathy. He concentrates, so to speak, on the musical sounds rather than the meaning. That is why his treatment of

'objective' works, Ghedini's version of organ pieces by Frescobaldi, Bartók's 'Concerto for Orchestra' and Ravel's 'Daphnis et Chloë', 'Bolero' and 'Pavane', is so successful. He is also deeply thoughtful—how else could he play Brahms so well? But in Beethoven's seventh and Tchaikovsky's 'Pathétique' symphonies he failed in imagination. Though the Beethoven (on 8 October) was commendable for refinement of orchestral detail and elegant phrasing, the reading was wanting in imaginative power. In great performances (Weingartner's, Toscanini's, or Furtwängler's—and how different these three are, one from another!) the sounds seem generated by the content of each passage: the work is conceived less as an orchestral score that must be played as clearly and as beautifully as possible, than as a symphony which is about something. Let no one scoff at the moral qualities of great performances! Cantelli's version was, so to speak, 'too orchestral'. Tchaikovsky's sixth symphony is not a moral work, but it is a deeply felt and personal testament, which needs more than clarity and fine playing. On 14 October Cantelli ignored many of the composer's careful indications (*incalzando*, *ritenuto*, *animando*, and the rest of them). Perhaps he hoped to obtain thus a greater impetus. The actual effect was to make the reading uninteresting, and the brilliant orchestral playing sound flashy. At the same time, understand that everything Cantelli did was well above the ordinary run of British concerts. And so, deservedly, he played to audiences which filled the hall throughout the series.

Cherubini's symphony in D, the composer's only essay in the medium, deserves a note. It was commissioned by the Philharmonic Society, and first played in London on 1 May 1815. On 23 October it had what was possibly its second English performance. A contemporary judgment, slightly backhanded in compliment, was: 'rich, well worked out, and nowhere marred by too much art'. The first movement is disappointing in its development section; the *larghetto cantabile* is melodically pleasing, but a little long; the minuet and trio make a delightful movement, the

minuet with its irregular phrases and odd accents, and the trio with its flute tune over chattering wood-wind chords; and the finale is graceful. In sum, not a 'neglected masterpiece', but an agreeable, pleasant composition, worth occasional revival.

#### David Moule-Evans's Symphony

One is always glad to see new works billed for London's orchestral programmes. But it was a sad waste of time (particularly when one considers how much music London has still to hear) for the London Symphony Orchestra to play, and for an audience to listen to, David Moule-Evans's Symphony in G at the Royal Festival Hall on 26 October. In the Australian Jubilee Composers' Competition Dr. Moule-Evans's Symphony was awarded the first prize of £800; the judges were Sir Arnold Bax, Sir John Barbiroli, and Eugene Goossens. 'In style', Dr. Moule-Evans says of his symphony, 'it owes nothing to the prevailing fashions of the present day'. Indeed, weak Sibelius, weak Elgar, and a good deal of English 'pastoral' neo-romanticism went to its making. Dr. Moule-Evans is an adept orchestral colourist, and tricks out the first movement with pretty harp and triangle parts; but one is amazed that the writer of the programme notes (who must admittedly be an apologist) could call it 'tersely constructed', or, indeed, sombre in mood. Conventional, banal and boring is this symphony. It was followed by Walton's fine violin concerto. The soloist, Thomas Matthews, did not prove himself a Heifetz, and the work really needs one. Yet it is good enough to be worth doing—not exactly badly, but less than superlatively well. The orchestral accompaniment was poor; and Mr. Matthews, though an understanding interpreter, never seemed on top of the work. Sir Malcolm Sargent conducted the concert.

#### Munich Philharmonic Orchestra

An orchestra visiting a foreign capital usually plays its best, excited by the occasion and by the sense of anticipation which a strange audience communicates. After enthusiastic reports from Paris and Vienna, hopes ran high for the London visit of the Munich Philharmonic. Record-collectors remembered, too, the brilliance and virtuosity of the orchestra's recording of Respighi's 'Brazilian Impressions'. Alas! what a disappointment came on 18 and 20 October at the Royal Festival Hall. Even allowing for the fact that London ears are in top gear after the recent visits of Toscanini and Cantelli, still the Munich concerts were irredeemably dull. Perhaps it was the orchestra's permanent conductor, Fritz Rieger, who was chiefly to blame for the general lack of bite, attack, precision, and brilliance in the playing. The orchestra seemed deficient in both corporate and individual distinction. The brass-playing, sonorous without being raucous, was perhaps the best feature. The wood-wind revealed no stars and no unanimous feelings about pitch. The strings were warm-toned but undisciplined. Fritz Rieger's interpretations were pedestrian in the extreme.

The programmes included the 'Eroica' and Brahms's first symphonies, and Strauss's 'Metamorphosen'. A set of variations on a theme of Sweelinck by the Bavarian composer Karl Höller (b. 1907) received its first, and, it is to be hoped, last British performance. Its uninspired, thick, kapellmeisterish writing bore resemblances to Reger's attempts at Debussy-like scoring. Haydn's cello concerto was played, without Gevaert's re-instrumentation, by Ludwig Hoelscher, with beautiful tone and no feeling. Livia Rev played Beethoven's piano concerto no. 1 with velvet hands in velvet gloves: there was charm and grace, but no suspicion of unseen power or deeper thoughts behind these qualities. Was Beethoven ever merely charming?

JOHN AMIS.

#### Concert of French Music

The Saturday afternoon French concerts in the Wigmore Hall (which started in 1942) have brought to England many of France's most distinguished performers. The seventy-fourth of these, on 18 October, presented a new baritone, Bernard Lefort, in song-cycles by Fauré, Ravel, Messiaen, and Jean-Michel Damase. From France we have come to expect cultivated, artistic and intelligent baritones: Lucien Fugère, Bernac, Souzay, Michel Dens. M. Lefort is a worthy example. He has a high baritone voice, pleasing and true. His elocution is good, his phrasing and vocal colouring sensitive. His presentation is agreeably unaffected: only when called on to sing both high and loud does the voice lose its smoothness. Olivier Messiaen is an interesting composer. In mystic content he seems to be a follower of Franck, and his work is profoundly serious. Messiaen listens intently to the sounds of nature, the birds, the wind, and the sea; and they are evidently the inspiration behind some of the strangely expressive new sonorities to be heard in his compositions. In 'The Blackbird', a *morceau de concours* for flute and piano, played at this concert by Alex Murray, Conservatoire prizewinner, the imitated birdsong is hardly transformed into musical composition. The song-cycle, 'Poèmes pour Mi', however, an ardent, devotional work, is impressive. 'Mi' is the composer's wife. The songs, to the composer's own words, are in strangely fluctuating rhythms, harmonically evocative, and striking in their treatment of voice and piano. (In passing, I recommend organists to explore those early pieces by Messiaen, particularly 'The Vision of the Church Eternal', broadcast on 31 October by André Fleury.)

The recital was shared by Jean-Michel Damase. As accompanist he was sensitive; as piano soloist (in Fauré's *Neuf Préludes*), able; and as composer fluent, sophisticated and graceful. Fauré and more than a dash of Poulenc have gone to his making. Possibly his Sonata for piano would make a more effective Sonatine. 'No Exit', a song-cycle to poems by Paul Gilson (the titles are English but the words are French), afforded evidence of a more individual creative urge. The nostalgic verses (concerned with a certain 'Lorna de Maida Vale') were matched by music melodious and apt.

A. P.

#### Young South African Composers

The concert sponsored by the Society for Promotion of New Music and held at the Arts Council's London headquarters on 29 October made it clear that young South African composers are in touch with modern musical practice and by no means all disposed to wallow in a late-romantic backwater. The works performed on this occasion, however, did not reach a generally satisfactory level. The exception was Stanley Glasser's Four Inventions for violin and viola, played by Eli Goren and Cecil Aronowitz; this did not perhaps say anything very striking, but it achieved—what is much rarer for a young composer—a satisfactory form and a marked consistency of style. Mr. Glasser (a pupil of Benjamin Frankel) is evidently a man to watch. John Joubert's viola and piano sonata sprawled uncomfortably, despite occasional flashes of undeniable musicianship. Mr. Aronowitz's partner in this work was Hubert du Plessis, who afterwards was again at the piano for his own composition, 'Vreemde Liefde' (Strange Love), a song-cycle in Afrikaans which was sung by Jacob de Vries. The settings were too uniformly declamatory and otherwise insufficiently varied to maintain interest. Three Inventions for piano by Stefans Grové, played by Edith Osler, were mildly engaging pieces in free-atonal style, with diatonic concords clamped on unhappily at the end.

A. J.

## Music in the Provinces

### Song Recital by John Goss

More than twenty-five years ago Dr. Harvey Grace, reviewing in this journal a batch of songs by Bernard van Dieren, ended his criticisms thus: 'However, a reviewer makes these strictures with diffidence. The wholehearted advocacy of such a singer as John Goss makes one hesitate. Clearly the proof lies in an unusual degree in performance, so it is to be hoped that Mr. Goss and others of like enterprise will give their public a chance of getting on terms with this much-debated composer.' (December 1925.)

Van Dieren is no longer the 'much-debated composer'. He is, instead, merely an ignored composer. Perhaps it is simpler that way. Moreover, if there have been 'others of like enterprise' one has not heard of them. But Mr. Goss, for his part, is still the missionary, still the ardent advocate of good, rare and ignored things. A song recital by him on 14 October proved well worth the dismal journey by this reviewer from the West Riding to Birmingham.

There are still flashes of tonal beauty in Mr. Goss's voice though, naturally, it is not what it was. He would not, one thinks, admire one for suggesting otherwise. In any case he was racked by laryngitis on this particular evening which upset his *mezza voce* considerably—a contingency that would have spelt death to the work of most singers. That this concert remained of absorbing interest itself speaks for Mr. Goss's artistry. To my mind he stands as much above the average song recitalist as Toscanini stands above the average conductor, while the quality of his programme (which attracted me in the first place) stood in stark contrast to the dreary offerings of most singers—in the provinces, at least—whose concerts are so often sponsored by the Arts Council.

The chief item was the group of songs (some in manuscript) by van Dieren, which in performance seem natural, effortless and tinged by an aching beauty. Their admittedly difficult piano accompaniments were admirably realized by Philip Cranmer. The rest of the programme at this most enjoyable recital speaks for itself—three ayres by John Dowland; Purcell's dramatic scena 'Let the dreadful engines of eternal will' from 'Don Quixote'; three Goethe Lieder by Beethoven, opus 83; three songs from Schumann's 'Der Arme Peter' and three from Liszt's 'Wilhelm Tell', three Méloides by Fauré and a group of Falla's 'Canciones Populares Españolas'.

ERNEST BRADBURY.

**Aberdeen**—Aberdeen Choral Society in 'The Creation' under David Henderson, 21 October.

**Belfast**—City of Belfast Orchestra under Denis Mulgan in popular classics, 5 October.

**Birmingham**—City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in Hindemith's piano concerto (Mewton-Wood) under Rudolf Schwarz, 23 October. Oriana and Rubery Choirs (Madame G. Aird-Briscoe) sang 'The

Creation' on 22 October with the C.B.S.O. At the first recital of the newly-formed Birmingham Chamber Music Society (15 October) the Amadeus played Haydn, Wolf and Schubert.

**Bournemouth**—The Municipal Orchestra under Charles Groves in Vaughan Williams's Sixth Symphony, 16 October.

**Bristol**—Bristol Concert Orchestra under Frank Cantell in a programme of well-known classics, 12 September; Stanford's Irish Rhapsody no. 1, 3 October.

**Dorking**—Vaughan Williams Birthday Celebration concert (11 October) by members and friends of the Leith Hill Music Festival, conducted by Dr. William Cole and Sir Adrian Boult.

**Glasgow**—Glasgow Chamber Music Society (15 October): the Bolzano Piano Trio in Brahms, Mozart and Schubert.

**Hanley**—Stoke-on-Trent Symphony Orchestra, Bedford Singers, Dr. Leon Forrester (organ), H. Leslie Jones (conductor), 16 October. Programme included Philip Cannon's choral suite 'Songs to Delight'.

**Huddersfield**—Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra (Maurice Miles) in Strauss's 'Death and Transfiguration', 3 October.

**Leeds**—Amadeus Quartet in Beethoven, Haydn and P. Racine Fricker, 23 October.

**Manchester**—Turner Chamber Concerts Society (29 September): two Fantasies by Gibbons, and Dvořák's String Quartet, op. 106. Manchester Chamber Concerts Society: the Amadeus Quartet in Haydn, Brahms and Mátyás Seiber's no. 3, 13 October.

**Newcastle-under-Lyme**—The New Music Group in part-songs, solos and madrigals, 26 September.

**Oxford**—Oxford Ladies' Musical Society presented the Röntgen String Quartet in Henk Badings's no. 3, 19 October.

**Portsmouth**—Portsmouth Philharmonic Society in 'Elijah' under John A. Davison, 11 October.

**Rochdale**—Rochdale Philharmonic Society, under Fred Leach, the 'Eroica', 7 October.

**Scarborough**—September Proms with the Lemare Orchestra (Iris Lemare). Walter Susskind conducted two programmes.

**Sheffield**—Parr Chamber Concerts, 4 and 25 October, included first performances of works for bassoon and piano by Willy Hess.

**Stevenage**—Stevenage Musical Society's concert on 25 October included Walter Leigh's Concertino for clavier and strings, with Elizabeth Poston at the piano and Peter Boorman conducting.

**Swansea**—Swansea Municipal Choir with the L.P.O. under Norman del Mar on 18 October in a Handel programme.

**Wolverhampton**—Combined children's, youth club, and Women's Institute choirs with the Stafford Symphony Orchestra, under Maude Smith in a Vaughan Williams concert, 15 October.

Ernest Read's annual Christmas concert with the London Senior Orchestra and a special choir of 500 voices will take place at the Albert Hall on 17 December at 7.30. Isobel Baillie, William Herbert and William Parsons are the soloists and the programme includes Vaughan Williams's Fantasia on Christmas Carols, Britten's Ceremony of Carols and Michael Head's 'The Mummers'. Tickets (2s. to 7s. 6d.) may be had from the box office. Youth parties, for whom reductions can be made, should apply to Mr. C. D. Bartlett, 30 Goldsmith Avenue, W.3. A stamped addressed envelope must accompany all applications.

Alexander Brent-Smith, the Gloucestershire musician who died in 1950, was commemorated by a concert at Stroud on 18 October. Local amateurs, and a choir and orchestra from Bristol University, participated under Dr. W. K. Stanton. The programme included a 'Cotswold Concerto' for bassoon, piano and strings, and a shortened concert version of the opera 'The Age of Chivalry'.

The Carl Flesch Medal for violin-playing, 1952, has been awarded to Pierre Jetteur, a Belgian. The runner-up was Clarence Myerscough, of London.



# A Visit to the Soviet Union

By BERNARD STEVENS

THE Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow is a large and very beautiful theatre, which last year celebrated its 175th birthday. I attended five performances there during the three weeks which I recently spent in the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Society for Cultural Relations with the U.S.S.R. The theatre is similar in design to the Scala in Milan or to Covent Garden. It has an enormous stage, ideally suited to the spectacular productions of the great Russian nationalist operas of the nineteenth century, in which this theatre specializes. It is difficult to describe the breath-taking realism of these productions. The lavishness of the costumes and the skilful and artistic use of lighting were equally impressive. Nothing was left to the imagination; realism and not impressionism is the aesthetic basis of production. The acting was on an extremely high level, again consistently realistic; there was a complete absence of stylization. Characterization was vividly expressed, and even in crowd scenes the least important characters always acted convincingly. Glinka's 'Russlan and Ludmilla' and 'Ivan Susanin', and Tchaikovsky's 'The Queen of Spades' responded brilliantly to this style of production. Borodin's 'Prince Igor', however, I found disappointing. The exotic romanticism was carried to such lengths that it obscured the human content of the story. Even the Polovtsian Dances were overcrowded and lacked clarity of design. The singing was of a very uneven quality. The basses were consistently magnificent, in the great Chaliapin tradition, the contraltos mostly very good, but the sopranos and tenors were mostly lacking in power as well as in quality and range of tone. The chorus was excellent, rhythmically very precise and with magnificent tone. The orchestral playing was of a very high order, particularly that of the wood-wind and brass. The strings, although always sensitive and clean, were somewhat lacking in warmth of tone. All the productions bore witness to intensive rehearsal; it is in fact customary for a new production to be in rehearsal for as long as a year.

The theatre was completely full at every performance I attended at the Bolshoi Theatre. There were no late-comers, and the audience followed the performance with sustained concentration. There was very great enthusiasm at the end of every performance, with the exception of 'Prince Igor', where I felt that the audience's reaction was similar to my own. The audience appeared to consist of representatives of all aspects of Soviet society—workers from factories, railways, and mines, soldiers, shop assistants and peasants. It was impossible to observe any distinction of class or occupation in relation to the seats occupied. Most of the tickets are purchased in advance by factories, shops, trade unions, and other organizations, so there is no rushing for tickets at the box-office. The programmes, sold in the foyers and corridors before the performance, are in two sections, one devoted to information about the work performed and the other containing simply the names of the performers. The intervals are long, during which the bars are crowded with people eating enormous cream-cakes and drinking beer and mineral water. The performances begin at 8 p.m. and seldom end before 11.30 p.m.

The season of public concerts does not begin until October; I was therefore unable to attend a concert in either of the two very fine concert halls in Moscow, the Tchaikovsky Hall, which seats about 4,000, and the hall of the Moscow Conservatoire, which holds more than 2,000. I attended, however, a concert at the 'Palace of Culture' (such as every large factory possesses) of the Stalin Auto Works in Moscow. The general plan of the hall, built in 1935, is similar to that of the Royal Festival Hall in London. The con-

cert was given entirely by the factory workers, but was open to all people living in the district. An excellent mixed choir, wearing national costume, performed arrangements of folk songs and new topical songs in folk song style. One was about two girl workers who complained to the manager that there were no young men working in their department! There were also folk-dance groups, solo singers, and some excellent comedians. The general standard was extremely high, most of it of professional level. At a dance, a very good factory brass band played arrangements of folk dances. The only 'Western' dance music I heard throughout my visit to the Soviet Union was performed, usually very badly, in hotel restaurants.

I was invited by the Union of Soviet Composers to an informal meeting with their committee, about fifteen in number, in their large and well-appointed premises. Several well-known composers such as Kabalevsky and Shaporin were present. It will be remembered that these two composers were among those who had been criticized by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1948. They assured me that they had in no way suffered as a result of this criticism. They are both to have new operas produced at the Bolshoi this season. None of the composers present were satisfied with the music they were producing. They felt that it failed to give adequate expression to the spirit and vitality of the people, and declared that they needed more and not less criticism in order to discover the reasons for this. Shostakovich's new cantata, 'The Song of the Forests', written in celebration of the afforestation schemes of the post-war Five-Year Plan, which has received a very mixed reception in the West,\* was considered by them to be not a very good work in itself, but to contain potentialities for development which they hoped Shostakovich would succeed in realizing. They said their fundamental problem was how to give full expression to the many-sided nature of their optimism, without descending into the trivial or the over-obvious. The only aspects of their music with which they appeared to be satisfied were the numerous opportunities for performance and the excellent working conditions provided by the Government.

I asked them for their views on the work of living British composers. They were well informed about the activities of our composers; a long and laudatory article on Vaughan Williams appeared recently in *Sovetskaya Musika*, the leading musical journal. The scores of most of our leading composers are received in the U.S.S.R., as well as the *Musical Times* and most of the other musical journals. They admired the invention, imagination, and skill of our composers but (except for Vaughan Williams) were disturbed by the absence of specifically British characteristics.

I made an extensive tour of the Conservatoire of Music in Moscow, in the company of the Assistant Director, Prof. Orved, the leading authority on brass bands in the Soviet Union. There are 1,000 students, all holding scholarships and mostly residing in the Conservatoire. They are recruited mostly from the special music-secondary schools to which children of talent are sent between the ages of twelve and seventeen. At these schools all the general subjects are taught in addition to music. (In ordinary schools, class-singing only is taught—children's choirs, orchestras and individual musical tuition being provided in the 'Pioneer Palaces' to which nearly all children belong.) At the Conservatoire, a compulsory five-year course is taken in principal subject, second subject, history of music, philosophy, and one foreign language.

There are twenty-five conservatoires in the various republics. During my visit to the Georgian S.S.R. in

\*Cp. *Musical Times*, May and December 1951.—Editor.

the south I was shown over the Conservatoire at Tbilisi, the capital, by the Director, Prof. Kiladze, the leading Georgian composer. This conservatoire is about half the size of that in Moscow but is run on similar lines. Here, special emphasis is given to the collection and study of Georgian folk music by students who go on extensive tours of the remote parts of Eastern Georgia. This folk music is now widely performed by amateurs on all social occasions as well as in concerts; it is of a

very remarkable character indeed, frequently containing three-part polyphony, even in its original form dating from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

It was obviously impossible in so short a time to obtain a complete picture of the musical life of such a vast country, but I saw enough to be made aware of the enormous amount of musical activity of a high standard that is taking place, and of the significant part taken by music in the everyday life of the people as a whole.

### 'HYMNUS PARADISI' IN GERMANY

On 1 November Herbert Howells's requiem, 'Hymnus Paradisi', was performed in Germany for the first time. The performance marked the hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Liederkrantz (choral society) at Esslingen. In recent years the society has given such works as Berlioz's 'The Damnation of Faust' and Mendelssohn's 'Elijah', and on this occasion the programme also included a choral work by Hindemith, Stravinsky's 'Pulcinella' suite, and a shortened version of Handel's 'L'allegro, il penseroso, ed il moderato'. The conductor, Paul Schwob, has already become prominent as a successful interpreter of English music to German audiences.

The average German feels much more sceptical towards new works than would appear from musical journals serving modern music, from criticisms in the big German daily papers, and from the great number of music festivals in Germany dedicated to contemporary compositions. Such activities are the result of the courage and steadfastness of a few persons only. In view of the general conservatism it is of little significance that a certain small portion of the audience at Esslingen considered Howells's work 'too modern'. Today, indeed, when in Germany as elsewhere the truly musical educated listeners in an audience are becoming rarer, it would not be the best recommendation of a work for it to please all listeners in the same degree. But it is a fact that an unusually large number of listeners gave their spontaneous approval to Howells's work.

One of the reasons for this favourable reception was undoubtedly that, in listening to this work, the question of whether the music is 'modern' or 'traditional' simply does not arise. For this is a work of masterly balance. Indeed, 'balance' is the term which, in my opinion, best defines the distinct and characteristic value which makes this a noble work in many respects. The educated German listener could appreciate at once the astonishing unity of contents and form, the balance of *tempi* and sound, and the inner security of the individual themes. ('Schön ist, was selig ruhet in sich selbst', said one of our greatest poets, Eduard Mörike: 'beautiful is that which rests happily in itself'.)

I believe also that Howells's capacity for transforming suffering into hope meets our present situation better than any attempt to accuse the Creator in expressionistic fashion, to indulge in an intellectual kind of nihilistic see-saw, or to escape in purely formal experiments. The Sanctus forms, of course, the architectural climax of the composition, thanks to its—in the best

sense of the word—operatic highlights. But it is just the way in which this Sanctus leads on to quiet contemplation that brings out the essence of the work, so far removed from anything theatrical. Some poets and composers like to put on paper whatever they feel when still wrestling with their subject; but the greater poets and composers are those who express what appears to them as their true experience once the wrestling is over. It is precisely in this respect that Howells's 'Hymnus Paradisi' impresses on us an attitude which we cherish. We have had enough compositions which have got lost in some kind of expressionistic or Debussy-like softness and misery, but there are few works which know how to crown the deepest suffering of life with a Hallelujah.

That this work has much to say to us is certain; so, also, is the inward truth of the composer's artistic language. The German, moreover, likes the form of the requiem. The requiems of Mozart, Verdi, and Brahms belong to his most highly treasured possessions. For the broad public, therefore, it is an advantage that Howells's work shows many qualities similar to those of Brahms's Requiem, and that the Sanctus in particular reminds us of Verdi in his greatest *fortissimo* passages. The work stands as the wholly personal creation of an artist who demonstrates that a modern musician has no need to denounce the past. German listeners will join English ones in their admiration for this work, and further performances in Germany will follow this one. But where listeners might expect merely the academic product of a knowledgeable composer, they will be surprised to hear the noble message of a man who was able to conquer deep suffering and can now help others to do the same. The signs are that 'Hymnus Paradisi' will have as much success in Germany as it has had in England.

Thanks are due, not only in Germany, to Paul Schwob and the Liederkrantz. The technical difficulties of the score are well known to readers of this periodical. If the occasion did not give a final impression of all the high qualities of the composition, the reason was that the conductor had to work with a guest orchestra and with obviously restricted rehearsal time. There was not, indeed, the full splendour of orchestral sound expected from the score. Annemarie Hennig and Franz Klarwein, the soprano and tenor soloists, sang their noble and interesting parts with a simplicity most suitable to the inner spiritual meaning of the work.

EDWIN KUNTZ

(translated by A. Aber).

### 'BILLY BUDD' ON TELEVISION IN U.S.A.

Benjamin Britten's latest opera had its first hearing in the United States when the National Broadcasting Company Television Opera Theatre presented a cut version, carefully titled 'Scenes from Billy Budd', in a broadcast from its New York studios on 19 October. A great deal of interest was aroused by the event. It seemed a great coup for N.B.C. to have obtained priority on a novelty of world importance, especially since the other major English-language opera of the past year, 'The Rake's Progress', is to have its American premiere under no lesser auspices than those of the Metropolitan. European reports on 'Billy Budd' had been equivocal, to say the very least; everyone

interested in opera now wanted to hear and see for himself. No other opera from across the Atlantic has had a chance to make its initial impact on so large and catholic an audience.

To bring 'Billy Budd' within the hour-and-a-half of available time, it was necessary to make some heroic excisions. Peter Herman Adler, conductor and general artistic supervisor of the production, chose to eliminate all of act 2, scene 1; all of the battle scene in act 3; all of Claggart's aria in act 2, and most of Billy's aria at the beginning of act 4, as well as various conversational exchanges and ensemble developments. There were no breaks for act or scene divisions. It is difficult

for one whose knowledge of Britten's opera complete rests on the score alone to evaluate the merits and demerits of this procedure. Some who had heard the original production (Olin Downes, critic of the *New York Times*, among them) found the shortened version and television presentation infinitely preferable in terms of theatrical pace and excitement.

The work, at least after surgery, did not seem the sprawling, garrulous thing it had seemed to so many in the full version. It did, however, seem to me almost totally lacking in either consistent theatrical force or philosophical depth, although both objectives had clearly been aimed at by the librettists and the composer. The libretto, which seemed graceless and uninspired as heard here, never really comes to grips with the central problem of stating Melville's story in dramatic terms. The story of *Billy Budd* contains two conflicts. Before the murder the conflict is between essential goodness (Billy) and essential evil (Claggart); after evil has been struck down, the conflict shifts to Vere's choice between moral right, which he recognizes immediately, and legal right, which is contained in the naval statute-books. The problem of anyone who wants to make a stage piece out of the story is to find a way of making, as Melville does by literary means, the two somehow one. E. M. Forster and Eric Crozier have avoided this resolution by holding off the death of Claggart until the opera is four-fifths done and simply ignoring their dramatic problem thereafter. Shorn of its diversionary by-play, discussions of naval history, and splashy battle, the libretto of 'Billy Budd' stands naked and malformed. Even so, Britten could have salvaged much if he had not lent his characters so little

musical individuality and imposed on them so many false textual accentuations. Musical ideas may deserve precedence over words; but if so, they must add a value to make up for the obscured value of sense. Britten's do not add enough. It would be foolish to deny 'Billy Budd' its fine passages—the duet 'Jemmy Legs is down on you' is certainly one—but the long exchanges of recitative seem as barren of musical inspiration as they are insensitive to character and capricious in their setting of the English language. The orchestration, however, finely evokes the sea atmosphere.

The N.B.C. production had the advantage of fine conducting by Mr. Adler and good singing in all rôles. Theodor Uppman repeated his Covent Garden success as Billy, and Leon Lishner gave perhaps the finest performance of all as Claggart, singing with firm-anchored, resonant tone and acting with great force and subtlety. Andrew McKinley's Captain Vere was on the blank side dramatically, but he managed the vocal duties with an aplomb and musicianship necessarily far beyond that at the command of most tenors in most operas. Of the minor characterizations, Kenneth Smith's Dansker was by far the finest. The physical production, much admired by some, seemed to me weak and far below the possible level. The use of close-ups and medium shots was skilful and sensible, reflecting credit on Kirk Browning, the television director; but the sets, designed by William Molyneux, never left any doubt that the *Indomitable* was moored in a studio, and never gave any sense of space or the sea. How much better it would have been if the opera could have been filmed before it was transferred to the television screen!

JAMES HINTON, JUN.

## Music in the Foreign Press

### A Bach Problem

Franz Eibner, writing in the May-June issue of the *Österreichische-Musikzeitschrift*, re-examines the question of the correct order of Bach's organ variations (*partite diverse*) on 'Sei gegrüßet, Jesu gütig'. Schmieder, in his great catalogue, says that 'Var. I, II, IV and X were completed at Lüneburg (or even in Ohrdruf?), III and V at Mühlhausen, and VI-IX and XI at Weimar'. (The numbers refer to those in the Bach-Gesellschaft and Novello editions; VI and VII are reversed in Peters.) But Eibner has studied a photostat of the believed autograph in the Municipal Library at Carpentras, and, although he takes this to be only a copy made by someone in Bach's immediate circle, he has found that the order given there is I-V, VII, XI, IX, VI, VIII, X. The conclusions of his argument, which cannot be summarized here, are: (a) the work originally consisted of the 'Choral' and Var. I, II, IV and X; (b) Bach expanded this scheme by the insertion of more variations in the order of the Carpentras manuscript; (c) the work was therefore always intended to end with the long, triple-time Var. X, and there is no justification for the *ff*, full organ, treatment of XI (suggested by editors) now that its place is no longer at the end. One other point: VI, though evidently conceived and generally played as a piece for manuals only, is specifically marked in the Carpentras manuscript 'a 2 clav e ped.' and 'Pedal' is also written against the lowest part. Eibner suggests that this was motivated simply by the changed, and definite, position of the variation when it was placed among the 'pedal' variations which form the latter part of the work.

### Milhaud's Next Opera

Darius Milhaud has recently returned from a visit to Israel, reports an interviewer, Paul Guth, in the September *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift*. He was deeply struck by history's repetition—'In the woods where Saul smote the Philistines and David conquered Goliath, the Jews have smitten the Arabs'—and was inspired to compose for the State of Israel an opera on the subject of King David: 'In 1954 we shall celebrate

King David's three-thousandth birthday. In his honour I shall compose an opera on a libretto by Armand Lunel, which will have its first performance in Jerusalem. The action is set between two coronations, between the anointing of the boy David by Samuel, and the anointing of Solomon by David. In the middle of the work there will be a chorus of Israelites of the year 1954.'

### Mishandling the 'Eroica'

In the June issue of *Musica* (Germany), Rudolf Steglich protests against a number of features which have become generally accepted as part of the normal interpretation of the 'Eroica'. In the first place he objects to the harsh, exaggerated staccato treatment of the two opening chords 'as if Beethoven had intended to bark at the audience with a preliminary orchestral "Wow! Wow!" Beethoven wrote these two chords not as semiquavers, nor even as quavers, but as crotchets—admittedly with those little wedge-shaped strokes which in modern editions are commonly replaced by simple dots and are taken to indicate a breaking off short. But in Beethoven's time this sign indicated not simply *staccato*, but a bringing out in relief, whereby the note-value must be felt despite the superficially shortening effect of "detachment".'

### Britten and A. N. Other

An old and valued friend, the Milan *Bollettino bibliografico musicale*, has recently been resuscitated in a 'new series'. The most important feature so far has been the first two instalments of a valuable catalogue of all the operas produced in Venice from 1637 to 1745, but the *Bollettino* also comments on contemporary affairs: 'The English composer B. Britten has recently produced a 'Billy Budd' on the story of the same name by Melville. But there was one already by the Italian composer G. F. Ghedini. There is a well-known English proverb that if two men do the same thing it is not the same thing. And for us Britten is not Ghedini.'

'BABEL.'



## MISCELLANEOUS

The current (October 1952) issue of the *Musical Quarterly* (Schirmer, New York; Chappell, London) is of exceptional interest. A. Hyatt King contributes 'A census of Mozart musical autographs in England'; Otto Erich Deutsch traces, in letters by Schumann, Mendelssohn and others, the 'discovery' of Schubert's 'great C major' symphony. Arnold Schönberg's essay 'My Evolution' (translated and extended from a Spanish-language original) is a document of first importance. The most remarkable article, however, is one that nobody, from the musicologist to the humblest Bach-for-pleasure pianist, can properly ignore. It is 'A problem in baroque music' by Sol Babitz. Following the trail of Arnold Dolmetsch, the author deals with 'expressive rhythm'—that is, the old practice of performing a little unevenly notes written as of equal value (and all that follows from this). By a study of old theoretical texts and practical manuals, chiefly Quantz's instructor for the flute (1752), the author clarifies the old practices, and concludes that this century's 'dry, "classical" performances' of Bach are as much mistaken as the romantic performances against which they were a reaction. 'It is only through serious study of books such as Quantz's and the practical application of old rules that the broken tradition will be restored and the lost beauties of great music heard again.'

**The Dalcroze Society**

A Christmas Holiday Course will be held from 30 December till 2 January at 10a Newton Road, Westbourne Grove, W.2. Vera James is the director. Lecture-recitals will be given by Carl Dolmetsch on 'The Recorder' and by Sir Stuart Wilson on 'English Folk Songs'. Particulars from the Secretary.

A new choir, devoting itself chiefly to Renaissance composers, has been formed under the conductorship of Ronald Smith. Rehearsals are held at 7.0 on Thursdays at the Dineley Studios, Marylebone Road (opposite the R.A.M.). More members are needed, especially tenors and basses. Particulars may be had from Mr. Smith at 31 Elm Park Gardens, S.W.10.

Young singers with sight-reading ability are invited to join a small madrigal society being formed in Hampstead, meeting on Thursdays. Information from Mr. James Watson, 94 South Hill Park, N.W.3.

Singers (all voices) are invited to join a small, efficient group specializing in Tudor music. Weekly rehearsals are held. Particulars may be obtained from the conductor at 22 Harcourt Street, W.1.

Musicians troubled with deafness, and living in or near London, are invited to join an L.C.C. choral and orchestral class held at the Old Kent Road School for the Deaf on Thursday evenings. Those interested should write to Miss Eva Nendick, 114 Riverview Road, Ewell, Surrey.

South Place Sunday Concerts for December are as follows: Robert Masters Quartet in Beethoven and Brahms and, with J. Edward Merrett, in the 'Trout' Quintet (7); Peter Gibbs String Quartet in Haydn, Bartók and Beethoven (14); Aleph String Quartet in Mozart, Elgar, and (with Jean Davies) in Schumann's piano quintet (21).

**Pupils of Alan Bush**

A concert of works by composers who have studied with Alan Bush is to be given on 5 January at the Wigmore Hall. These composers include N. G. Long, the critic; Hubert du Plessis, a South African composer who has come to England on a scholarship awarded by the Performing Right Society; and Herbert Murrill, the late Head of Music of the B.B.C. The artists will

include Margaret Kitchin, Gervase de Peyer, Bernard Stevens, John Glickman, and the Aleph Quartet.

**Arts Council Report, 1951-52**

This report (2s. 6d.) is unusually interesting for its coloured charts showing, among other things, the costs of a symphony orchestra and the extent of the state's contribution to various arts. 'Unless more aid [from local authorities] . . . is speedily forthcoming some of our orchestras face early extinction.' The year's grant from the Treasury was £575,000 (excluding the Festival of Britain) of which £219,925 went to opera and ballet, £106,626 17s. 6d. to other musical activities, and £3,000 to the Edinburgh Festival. (Other Scottish activities not included here.)

**London Philharmonic Orchestra.**

The services of Mr. Thomas Russell, who as chairman and managing director has been mainly responsible for the orchestra since 1939, were terminated on 14 November. Mr. Adolf Borsdorf, concert director, has resigned. The new chairman is Mr. Eric Bravington.

Oxford University Opera Club will produce Mozart's 'La Clemenza di Tito' at Oxford Town Hall on 3-6 December.

**Clairvoyant Criticism**

As already announced, the first performances of Vaughan Williams's seventh symphony (*Sinfonia Antartica*) will take place in Manchester and London next month. The suspense has apparently been too much for a contributor to the October issue of *Musical America*. He writes that this composer, 'born in Wales', who used to 'give courses in the Royal Conservatory of Music', conducted the première of the seventh symphony 'recently'. The writer thoughtfully adds the information that this is 'a youthful, fresh work'.

**Weighty Opinion**

'The comely, 5-ft., 6-st. 6-lb. Livia Rev was last night's soloist . . .—Concert report in the *Daily Express*.

A correspondent asks us what value such a remark has as music criticism. Well, at least it shows that this player has not been neglecting her scales.

## OBITUARY

We regret to announce the following deaths:

CHARLES DRAPER, on 21 October, aged eighty-two. At his height he was the leading British clarinettist of his day. He was a member of Queen Victoria's private band, and a Musician in Ordinary to the two succeeding sovereigns. He was principal clarinettist at Covent Garden and with various symphony orchestras, and his performances of chamber music were also well known. Stanford's clarinet sonata is dedicated to him. He taught at the R.C.M. (where he himself was trained), the Guildhall School, Trinity College, and the Royal Military School of Music. More than anyone else he brought the Boehm-system clarinet into general use in England.

FRANCES ALDA, on 18 September in Venice, aged sixty-nine. Born Frances Jean Davies in Christchurch, New Zealand, she became a noted operatic soprano. She trained in Paris, sang at Covent Garden and other European opera-houses, and for twenty years was a leading member of the Metropolitan, New York. She was married twice, the first time to Giulio Gatti-Casazza, manager of the Metropolitan. In 1937 she published an autobiography, 'Men, Women, and Tenors.' She created the leading female rôle in Walter Damrosch's 'Cyrano' and other American operas.

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